

A History of  
the Independent or  
Congregational Church of  
Charleston  
South Carolina

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*Commonly Known as Circular Church*



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LANCE HALL

Built in its present form in 1858-59 for use as a Sunday-school hall.



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the Independent or  
Congregational Church of  
Charleston  
South Carolina

*Commonly Known as Circular Church*

By  
George N. Edwards



1947

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## *A FOREWORD*

*By C. REXFORD RAYMOND*

**W**HEN my friend who writes this history suggested the possibility of following him in this historic church in 1941, and the church extended the call, the prospect of sharing in the life of the "oldest Congregational church in the South" was a compelling allurement. Now at his request, I offer this foreword to the long story of the lone church that after two hundred years allied itself with the Congregational order.

Today there are over a million American Congregationalists, only sixty-two of their churches being older than Circular Church. All these older churches are in five New England states. The famous Mayflower brought the first American Congregationalists to New England sixty years before Circular Church was founded. In an area of New England less than half the size of South Carolina there are now 957 Congregational churches. Why has the growth of this denomination been so meager in the Southeast?

The first reason is that from 1620 to 1640 the influx of Puritans into New England was much greater than any similar migration after 1680 to 1690, the time of the founding of the Charleston, South Carolina, church. By 1640 twenty thousand Puritans had homes in New England and worshipped in at least thirty-five Congregational churches. It was much easier to promote churches there than among the scantier settlements in a colony where Dissenters were taxed to support the English Episcopal Church.

The second reason for the small growth of our churches in the Southeast was the idea, shared by all Puritan immigrants, that there was no need for counsel such as is now given

through state conferences. The Puritan belief in the supremacy of the individual conscience over any sort of external control made it true that, "for 200 years there were Congregational churches in this country but no Congregational Church. The several local churches had no bond of union, no denominational consciousness, no general acquaintance, and no united purpose or method of carrying on Christ's work in the world." (Edmand's "The Evolution of Congregationalism," page 112.)

Emphasis on fellowship as well as independence is a modern idea in Congregationalism. The New England churches had enough difficulties to make necessary occasional councils to decide controversies. But the early Dissenters opposed anything like our state conferences. One influential minister declared that councils led to Presbyterianism, Presbyterianism led to Episcopacy, and Episcopacy led to the Papacy. Our first state conference was in Maine, in 1827. Other state conferences followed. It was not until 1865 that there was any National Council of our churches. This early reluctance to have active fellowship with other churches of a like faith was comparable to isolation sentiments in some recent American political opinions.

While this lack of organized fellowship hindered the spread of our churches westward from New England, it was especially detrimental in the South where our churches were so few. It was only natural that isolated churches often merged with more closely knit groups of churches which offered them fellowship. If in those days our churches had been in close fellowship, the problems of Circular Church described in this History could have been solved.

Finally, state conferences were formed and Circular Church became successively a member of the Florida Conference, the Conference of the Congregational Churches of the Carolinas, and the Eastern North Carolina Conference of the Southern Convention. In 1939 it joined the Georgia Congregational Christian Conference. The hardships of fellowship in such great areas are illustrated by the fact that in 1946 our Georgia



Conference met about 350 miles from Charleston. It has had similar experiences in its former membership in other groups.

This first Independent or Congregational Church in Charleston, South Carolina, is thus a memorial to the colonial struggle for the freedom of the church against the tyranny of any state control of religion. Its history is also a warning against the exaltation of dissent and independence above the claims of fellowship. It is demonstrating in these later days that a true church can safely trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the experience of the individual believer and also be modest enough to take counsel with other Spirit-led churches.



## INTRODUCTION

**T**O those who still believe that all the Puritans landed on the bleak New England shores this volume will be a surprise. It contains the history of a Puritan church which not only flourished from the earliest days in the semi-tropical city of Charleston, South Carolina, but also produced a Unitarian schism, like those of the New England churches, at a time when the South is thought to have been too conservative, or, as some would say, too benighted, to tolerate liberalism of any brand.

The truth is that dissent in religion was not uncommon in the province of South Carolina. By their charter, granted a full generation after the violent persecutions by Archbishop Laud, the Lords Proprietors were empowered to grant liberty of conscience because, as this instrument recites, "it may happen that some of the people and inhabitants of the said Province cannot in their private opinions conform to the public exercise of religion, according to the liturgy, form and ceremonies, of the church of England . . ." and, the crafty grantor added, because "by reason of the remote distances of those places [Dissent] will, as we hope, be no breach of the unity and conformity established" at home in England. It did happen that many of the South Carolina colonists were unwilling to conform, and, though the Proprietors eventually saw to it that the Church of England was established in the province, they freely tolerated those who differed from it. Thus it was that, from the very beginning, the number of Dissenters was large, indeed, probably always a substantial majority.

The Congregational Church of Charleston (the Circular Church as it is popularly known) was the result of the first efforts at organization on the part of South Carolina Dissenters. It seems that they were content for some years with



a common organization. At least, there is reason to believe that Huguenots, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists all worshipped together in the White Meeting House which stood on the same site as the modern church and ultimately gave its name to one of Charleston's principal streets. The inevitable differentiation followed. Huguenot and Baptist churches were founded. In 1731 the Presbyterian element left the White Meeting House to form the first Charleston church of that denomination; in 1817 occurred the Unitarian secession; and after the Confederate War the large Negro membership of the Congregational church formed the separate organization known as the Plymouth Congregational Church. Thus the oldest dissenting church in South Carolina became the Congregational church of today. How true it remained to the Congregational principle of independence is perhaps best revealed in the part which its pastor, the Reverend William Tennent, played in bringing about the separation of church and state in South Carolina.

Unfortunately the records of the Congregational church are not complete. The earliest records have been lost. Those that remain, however, are a rich source of South Carolina church history. They were carefully examined by the author during his service as pastor of the church, and he has faithfully reported their contents.

J. H. EASTERBY

Charleston College  
Charleston, South Carolina

A HISTORY OF THE INDEPENDENT  
OR  
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA





## EARLY RECORDS

IT is with a shock of surprise that one learns that the land on which the rather modern-looking Congregational church on Meeting Street now stands was deeded to that church by Madame Frances Simonds, according to the quaint old record "in the third year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Anne, Queen of England and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and four," that this was to confirm the gift of that land by her husband, and that "many years since" a meeting-house had been built on that plot of land.

This is indeed the first church of the Dissenters who came in considerable numbers from England and Scotland, with other colonists of the Church of England, to lay the foundations of the city of Charleston. Not later than 1686 the French Huguenots, driven from France, came in numbers to cast their lot with the infant city, and united at first in the formation of an Independent church. Just how these emigrant Christians worshipped God in that misty decade from 1680 to 1690 is uncertain, as none of the four churches surviving from that time — Saint Philip's, the French Huguenot church, the First Baptist, and the Independent church — has any record of its organization. There is evidence that land was set apart for them and that certain ministers served here, but of formal church records there is no trace.\*

\* The First Baptist Church was organized at Kittery, Maine, in 1682, and moved to Charleston about 1693 to 1697. In a recent study of South Carolina Baptists by Miss Leah Townsend, Ph.D., published in 1935, the author concludes, after the collation of all available sources, that the "evidence for any date of organization prior to 1696 for the First Baptist Church of Charleston is inconclusive, as it is for that church's being the first established in the Colony." The meeting-house, she concludes, must have been built between July 18, 1699, and January, 1701.

The earliest book of records of this church now extant begins January 15, 1732, with the very important business of assigning the pews in a new brick building which the "managers" of this church had just "compleated with the advice of the Minister, Elders and Chief of said congregation." In this second meeting-house there were forty-seven pews to be allocated, besides "the Minister's Pew," wherein the Pulpit and the Clerk's Desk are placed, which is for all ministers at any time present and for the minister's family. There was one other large pew for strangers and such persons as "serve in any Trust or Place for said Congregation." In addition there was a gallery at the west end with benches adjoining the belfry. The names of the pew-holders are given as follows:

Samuel Fley	John and Edmond Atkin
Anthony Mathewes Sr.*	John Fraser
John Milner and Mary Ellis	James Mathewes
Daniel Crawford	Samuel Eveleigh
James Payne	Antho. Mathewes Jr.
Samuel Morris	John Bee and
Mary Betson and Charles Pinckney	Elizabeth Massey
Samuel Jones	George Ducat and
Garret Van Velsen	William Cleland
John Stone	Benjamin Savage
Solomon Legaré & Jas. Ballentine	Mary Owen
Ebenezer Simmons	Alexander Perroneau
Joseph Barry & Luke Stoutenburgh	George Hiskett
Stephen Bedon	Kath'ne Joor
Daniel Townsend	Andrew Allen
Henry Perroneau Jr.*	John Simmons
Henry Peronneau Sr.*	Thomas Lamboll *
Joseph Moody	Othniel Beale
Solomon Legaré Sr. & William Warden	Paul Jenys
Isaac Holmes	Miles Brewton
Thomas Cooper	Joseph Massey
John Dart	John MacKay
Elizabeth Holmes	Henry Livingston
	Jeremiah Milner *

\* The tombstones of the persons whose names are starred can be seen in the churchyard to this day. As the above list contains forty-five pewholders, it is evident that not many of the forty-seven pews were unoccupied when the new church was opened.

The minister's salary was to be £500 current (one pound current then equalling one-seventh of a pound sterling) and the use of a house and ground provided by the church. There was also a clerk appointed by the minister, paid by the managers £50 per annum for "Ringing the Bell, taking Care of and keeping Clean said Meeting-House, Pews and Seats, Weeding the Yard etc." This clerk also had "the sole Privilege of digging all Graves to be made in the Ground belonging to said Meeting-House," for which he was to be paid "Twenty Shillings for each Grave . . . one half thereof for his own proper Use," the other half going to the managers for repairing the fences. Certain rules are recorded for the election of managers and other business.

The minister at this time was Rev. Nathan Bassett, formerly of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the managers, Messrs. Miles Brewton, Joseph Moody, and Thomas Lam-boll. The triple name of this church is given on the first page of the record book as "Presbyterian, Congregational or Independent." In addition to the three managers the following twenty-nine names are given as voting members: John Dart, Luke Stoutenborough, Benjamin Savage, Anthony Mathewes Jr., Ste. Bedon, Henry Peronneau Jun'r, Isaac Holmes, Sam'l Fley, Alex'r Peronneau, Thom's Cooper, Charles Starnes, James Mathewes, John Simmons, Sam Eveleigh, Solomon Legaré, Henry Peronneau, Anthony Mathewes, Garr. Van Velsen, Othniel Beale, John Atkins, Samuel Jones, John Milner, Law'r Withers, Solomon Legaré Jun'r, John Ballentine, James Ballentine, Albert Detmar, Henry Livingston, Samuel Morris. These extracts give us a picture of the organization as it functioned in 1732, and the very representative character of the personnel in the colonial history of Charleston.

#### DATE OF FOUNDING

Here we have a church more than two centuries ago already planning and erecting its *second* building because the first, erected "at the beginning of the settlement, is now by



long time gone to decay and become very old." This group of worshippers is able to raise over six thousand pounds for its new building and to call a minister from Cambridge, the only school for training ministers in the country at that time. This is a free and independent body, enjoying no income from taxes or favors from the provincial government or from England, but building out of its own resources to meet the needs of a congregation which crowded its doors.

Whence did it come? How did it grow? How long had it been here? As the records go on they go backward. Copies of various legal instruments are included dating back to 1695. What became of the very earliest records, which doubtless contained the date of founding and the names of the founders, is indicated by a memorandum bearing the date of February 8, 1733, derived from John Tipar, clerk of the church. This memorandum records that "there was former a Register kept belonging to the Meeting-House and Congregation which by Misfortune of the Great Hurricane that happened on the 5th and 6th Sept'r 1713 was lost; when the House where the Rev'd Mr. Wm. Livingston, dec'd, then lived (and in whose possession it was) at White Point in Chas-Town, in this Province, was washed and carried away by the over-flowing of the sea."

The name of the first minister of the church given in the Manual printed in 1870 is Benjamin Pierpont, settled in 1691. This is no doubt taken from David Ramsay's "History of Circular Church," printed in 1814, where the list of pastors up to his time is given. We need to look for the beginnings farther back than 1691, however. The document already quoted says that the first building was erected at the "beginning of the settlement," which was 1680, on the present site. The deed of the church lot recorded in 1704 says that a brick meeting-house, "Built many years since," is standing on the land. In the letter sent by the officials of the church to London in 1750 (seeking for a new pastor) it speaks of the church as "founded *upwards* of sixty years ago." This puts it definitely in the decade 1680-1690.

The date at which the first building for worship was erected is difficult to ascertain, but we do know that it was there on June 20, 1695, when Frances Simonds mortgaged the property for £63 to Governor Joseph Blake, who gave his bond for £1000 sterling to convey the property upon payment of £63 current silver to Benjamin Pierpont, John Alexander, John Jones, their heirs, etc., to the use and behoof of such persons as "subscribe and pay sums of money for building and repairing the Meeting-House standing and being upon the town lot above mentioned." When Governor Blake made his will, December 27, 1699, he made this proviso: "I remit what is due to me on ye Presbyterian Meeting-House in Charles Town and desire that the title be made to the House." The formal deed of Widow Frances Simonds on October 23, 1704, conveyed the property, according to her husband's intention, to Thomas Landgrave Smith; Robert Fenwicke, planter; Joseph Boone, merchant; John Stevens of Dorchester, planter; Joseph Warnock and Jonathan Drake the Younger, planters: who are to "see and take care that the plot of ground and the House thereon standing do continue to be appropriated and used to and for the Religious Worship of God therein to be from time to time Publicly Solemnized and performed by any Protestant Dissenting Minister of the Congregational, Independent or Presbyterian Perswasion." This rather involved way of holding ecclesiastical property was necessary at that time, as a Dissenting church was not recognized as a corporation.

From public records at the capitol in Columbia we learn that Henry Simonds bought certain lots, near his house and fronting westward on what is now Meeting Street, from Robert Seabrook on November 5, 1680. If these were the lots later known as 188 and 189, this leaves an open period of fifteen years, 1680 to 1695, during which he could have donated the land informally for the building of a meeting-house. In A. S. Salley's "Warrants for Lands in South Carolina" it appears that Henry Simonds had lots laid out for him on February 28, 1693, by the Surveyor General's Office, and that

the grants were made June 12, 1694. His will, conveying all his estate, real and personal, to his wife Frances, his sole executrix, was proved March 3, 1695. It is rather difficult to believe that for about fifteen years Presbyterians and Independents, who were numerous in the colony, had no regular place for religious meetings. If in 1729, when subscriptions were gathered for a new building, that old meeting-house, "erected in early times," had "gone to decay and *become very old* and out of repair," a longer time than thirty-five years was needed to account for its decrepitude.

It has perhaps not been realized at this distance from the beginning of the colony that the Dissenters were a large and important part of the population. The first governor appointed by the Lords Proprietors in 1669 was William Sayle, described as a "Puritan and Non-Conformist." Thomas Smith, Landgrave and governor, was a Dissenter; John Archdale, who, "being in the nature of a Proprietor," became governor, was a Quaker; Joseph Blake, his friend and appointee, who succeeded him, was a Dissenter, as was Joseph Morton. George Howe, in his "History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina," states that by 1685 a population of twenty-five hundred had been brought over, that a portion were of the Established Church of England, but that a large majority were Dissenters from that church (English, Irish, and Scotch), and that in addition there were the French and Dutch Protestants, who had never affiliated with it. Disciplined in the school of affliction, he says, their sufferings resulted to a large extent from conscientious maintenance of religious opinions against possessors of power and influence. They came partly to better their condition in things temporal, but the majority of those from England came for freedom to worship God. Some, like the French, fled to escape bitter persecution. As early as 1687, by the will of César Moze, 37 *livres* were bequeathed to "the French Refugees in Charleston to assist in building a house of worship on the eastern branch of the Cooper River." McCrady in his "South Carolina under Proprietary Government," page 440, cites Rever-



end Edward Marston, then rector of St. Philips, as saying about 1706 that the Dissenters (in Charlestown\*) constituted about two-thirds of the population. Marston is also quoted as saying of them, "They are the soberest, the most numerous, and richest people of the Province." McCrady himself judges that the people of the Church of England constituted nearly one half of the population.

It would be strange indeed if such a group of religious people should not at once take steps to inaugurate religious services of their choice, but it is difficult to name the first English minister of the Dissenting faith. Yates Snowden, in his "History of South Carolina," says that Governor William Sayle, in his letters to the Proprietors, about 1670, bewails the absence of a minister of the Gospel, and asks for a Mr. Simpson Bond to be sent, but he never was. The first Dissenting minister we hear of is mentioned by Howe.\* He relates that Francis Mackemie, a Presbyterian minister, wrote from Virginia, July 22, 1684, to Increase Mather in Boston, of his "design for Ashley River, South Carolina." On July 28, 1685, he writes again, "I have also wrote Mr. Thomas Barrett, a minister who lived in South Carolina, who when he wrote to me from Ashley River was to take shipping for New England." Howe adds: "Of Rev. Thomas Barrett living on Ashley River at or before 1685 we have no further knowledge." At that time there was no other white settlement on the Ashley River except the place called Charlestown, and that of most recent date.

Not a few of the later ministers of the Independent church came from Harvard College. But there was no graduate or student of Harvard in this period by that name. At Cambridge University in England there was a Thomas Barrett graduated in 1681, but nothing to show that he was ever a Dissenter or that he ever came to this country. He was given a vicarage under the Archbishop of York, but his university has no further record of him.

\* George Howe's *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, Vol. I, p. 76.

Curiously enough I have found the name of one Thomas Barrett in the court records of Boston as being delivered on "the first of May 1676 to the keeper of the prison for dangerous and mutinous words." There is nothing to indicate that these words were of a theological character.

In Professor Charles A. Briggs's "American Presbyterianism" the author refers to Thomas Barrett as the first of the New England missionaries sent to Carolina and as one who labored on the banks of the Ashley River prior to 1684. He also speaks of William Dunlop, a Presbyterian licentiate from Glasgow, who settled first at Port Royal, South Carolina, and later removed to Charlestown, where he was active in the civil and military life of the colony from 1685 to 1689. A letter dated at Charlestown October 17, 1689, refers to him as the minister, and he is spoken of as marrying Thomas Landgrave Smith to his second wife. He was an able man of many accomplishments; after his return to Scotland he was appointed president of the University of Glasgow and later received full ordination as a minister. His versatility is shown by his having been deputy to the Lords Proprietors, member of the Grand Council, major of the militia, and special agent of the governor on a difficult mission to the Spaniards in Florida. Incidentally he had a mercantile business in Charlestown. While there is no mention of an organized church of which he was pastor, it is evident that he was regarded as a minister in the little city.

#### EARLY PASTORS

The first pastor of whom we have definite information was Benjamin Pierpont, M.A. According to Sibley's "Harvard Biographies" he was born July 26, 1668, received his degree in 1689, and died at Charlestown January 3, 1698. He was the fifth son of John Pierpont of Roxbury, Massachusetts. Howe says of him that he migrated from Boston "in 1691 with a select company to found an Independent church in Charlestown." It may well be that whatever organization

had been made by previous Dissenting ministers had been suspended during the interval without a pastor. Benjamin Pierpont may be looked upon as the founder of the church as an organization that has continued uninterruptedly to the present, although sometimes pastorless and dependent on lay leadership. Even fire and the sufferings of war combined were not able to destroy it.

Mr. Pierpont was succeeded by Hugh Adams, who is described at some length in "Harvard Biographies" by quotations from his own narratives and other contemporary sources. He was a picturesque but rather futile person, nearly always in hot water, very explosive over such points as whether magistrates should wear wigs and whether Sunday should be called the Sabbath.

He was born in 1676, graduated from Harvard in 1697, and came to Charlestown in 1698. On his arrival he found the plague raging. He describes it in these words: "The dead were carried in carts, being heaped one upon another. Worse by far than the Great Plague of London, considering the smallness of the town. Shops shut up for six weeks; nothing but carrying medicines, digging graves, carting the dead." While he survived, he had considerable sickness himself, as well as some freedom in the use of medical terms, as shown in the following statement: "In South Carolina I was sick of a Putrid Feaver, and of the Tertian Ague and Feaver, the Dropsie, Scurvy, Pestilence, Hypochondriack Melancholy, and Gongra Gout." Not having any physician of skill near him, he was obliged to study "Physick and Chururgey," with the result that he began to practice on himself, "and with the Lord's Blessing recover'd a cure for each disease aforesaid." Having surrendered the Charlestown charge to Mr. John Cotton early in 1699, he accepted a call to settle at Wandoe River, about thirteen miles from the town. There two meeting-houses were built for him and the widely scattered worshippers. After two years, only half his salary having been paid, he removed to a place on the Ashley River about sixteen miles west of Charlestown, where he preached for two years



in his own house. In 1701 he had married Susanna Winborn. He relates that he was troubled by a ship carpenter named Scrivener, a "mighty preacher of the Anabaptist error." Adams challenged him to a public debate, to be held in the Anglican Church. To avoid the sheriff, who had writs to serve upon him for his debts, he speeded to the place appointed on a "Virginia White Steed" which had been lent to him, and found refuge. The Anabaptists asked for a postponement of the debate. The predicament of Adams in regard to his debts being learned, the sum of sixty pounds was raised for him by contributions of both Anglicans and Presbyterians, and he was delivered out of his troubles, to the confusion of his opponent. Later he received a call to a neighborhood on the South Edisto River about fifty miles from Charlestown. In 1705, with salary again unpaid, and with an Indian War impending, he went back to New England. This, much abbreviated, is from his own story.

The next pastor was John Cotton, the son of the distinguished John Cotton of Boston. He was born March 15, 1639/40, and was a graduate of Harvard College in the class of 1657. In 1698, after a thirty-year pastorate in the original Pilgrim Church at Plymouth, he had been dismissed by council. One Saturday morning in July of that year, while still resident in Plymouth, he writes to his son as follows:

"Dear Son: God's ways are past finding out. When I came home I found Mr. Robert Fenwick at my house where he had waited divers hours for me with his call subscribed by Gov. Blake, some of his council and sundry inhabitants of Charlestown, and their promises amount to £67 annually. Mr. Allyne, Mr. Willard send me a letter under their hands encouraging me.

Mr. Lord much encourages me to goe. Mrs. Lord grasps your mother by the hand, is ready to leap out of her skin for joy."

Mr. Lord was the pastor of the Dorchester group who had migrated to South Carolina in 1695. He had returned with his wife April 16, 1698.

Having accepted the call, Mr. John Cotton leaves his wife and sons in New England. On November third and again on



the ninth he writes to his son that he is only waiting for a fair wind to take his departure. He writes with much concern about his papers and MSS., which he wants to have preserved, and closes his letter to his son Rowland with the words: "I pray you (which I know you will do) assist your dear mother in all her affairs and comfort her to the utmost."

This John Cotton, in his earlier life, before beginning his pastoral work in Plymouth, had been a missionary to the Indians. He had prepared a "Vocabulary of the Indian Language," the MS. of which, bound in vellum, is now in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, as are the originals of the letters quoted above. He preached his first sermon to the Indians in 1666, and was such a valuable assistant to John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, that the latter made Cotton his literary executor. He had helped in the revision of the Indian Bible, and to him was left the revision of other MSS. for publication, a work which, wrote John Eliot, "none other but Mr. Cotton is able to help me perform." \*

When John Cotton was ordained in Plymouth Church in 1669, John Howland, an aged survivor of the original Pilgrims, was one of those who joined in the laying on of hands. Thus the early Independent or Congregational church of Charlestown was linked to the first Pilgrim church in America. The visit of Robert Fenwick to secure Mr. Cotton for their pastor may be attributed to their desire to secure a man of maturity and ability, so that there would be no danger of importing a flighty youngster like his predecessor. In his ministry Mr. Cotton is said to have made much of the Psalms and of a three-year course in catechising, using the General Assembly's Shorter Catechism. His son writes: "My father was a living index to the Bible,—he had a vast and strong memory. He could give chapter and verse from a word or two of the verse and recite the verse if given its number, etc." He was gifted in prayer, scholarly, a hearty friend, but hasty in temper and judgment. He had a very wide correspondence, was of a

\* *Harvard Biographies*, Vol. IV.

"handsome, ruddy, yet grave countenance, a sanguine complexion, of medium stature, inclined to fatness, very seldom ill."

He arrived in Charlestown December 7, 1698. "Here," writes his son, "he set himself to do all the good he could and was very abundant and successful in his labors. . . . He gathered a church and was settled pastor of it Mar. 15, 1699. Twenty-five new members were received to full communion. He was abundantly respected by the good, and even by the Governour himself." He died, however, of yellow fever, September 17 or 18, 1699, only a little over six months after his settlement. The church bore the expenses of his funeral and erected a monument over his grave. One of his sons set up a memorial stone for him in Plymouth in 1725, which can still be seen on Burial Hill.

Fortunately we have a fragment of a letter by John Cotton written in Charlestown in 1699. It begins on page 5 of the letter, where he speaks of "Lantgrave Morton who of all the Council is my most ingenuous friend and comes to heare me each Sabbath." He speaks of Nicholas Trot, the King's Attorney General, and says that new members are coming in weekly, so that the church fellowship amounts to one hundred and fifteen; he refers to Mr. Pierpont, the former pastor, and speaks of the possibility of baptizing a Jew who has come to him "lively in his good motions"; he requests that a "stately gown of sad stuffe such as Bro. M. or his son weare [be] made and brought with your mother [which] will cover my meaner clothes on the Sabbath." Near the close he writes: "Two ships have come in this morning; Mr. Bennett in a great fly (?) boat waits but a high tide to bring him over the barre to us." One cannot but feel a note of tragedy in the anticipation if this was the ship from the Barbados which brought death "over the barre" both to him and to nearly two hundred fellow citizens.\*

And so the young church was again left pastorless.

\* This letter is preserved by the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston.

## THE FOUNDING OF THE DORCHESTER CHURCH

It will be of interest here to give some account of the migration of the Congregational church from Dorchester, Massachusetts, under the leadership of Joseph Lord as pastor. He had been a school-teacher at Dedham and later at Dorchester. Here he studied under Rev. John Danforth, and on October 22, 1695, was ordained as pastor of a missionary church gathered to go to South Carolina. One William Warner had arrived from South Carolina and asked that missionaries be sent there. The little migrating church consisted of Joseph Brooks, Nathaniel Billings, and Simon Dakin, of Concord, William Adams of Sudbury, Increase Sumner and William Pratt of Dorchester, and George Foxe of Reading. "These did enter into a most solemn covenant to set up the ordinances of Jesus Christ there if the Lord carried them safely thither."\*

They duly arrived in Charlestown, after a two-weeks voyage (half the usual time), on November 20, 1695. In the diary of Elder William Pratt (named above), published by Rev. James Stacy in 1899, in the "History of the Midway (Georgia) Congregational Church," he writes: "When we came to the town our vessel fired three guns and the people to welcome us fired about nine which was more than us all." He mentions going to church, which would naturally be the church of their own order. After due counsel they decided to settle on the banks of the Ashley River, about twenty miles up, where several thousand acres were allotted to them. Here they erected a temporary meeting-house in the midst of their settlement. In the records of the Dorchester church in Massachusetts it is recorded that on "Feb. 2 the first sacrament of ye Lord's Supper that was ever celebrated in Carolina † [was observed].\*" Eight persons were received besides Such as were

\* Quoted from the records of the First Congregational Church of Dorchester, Massachusetts.

† It is difficult for the chronicler, aware of other Christian churches in Charlestown before this date, to accept the statement that the Lord's Supper had not been observed in Carolina before. The newcomers may not have been accurately informed of what had happened before their arrival.



of ye Church by virtue of Comunion of Churches, and there was great joy among ye Good People of Carolina and many Thanksgivings to ye Lord." Thus was the daughter of the third Congregational church in America instituted in South Carolina, carrying the name of the old English Dorchester into the South.

A more permanent building of brick was erected in about a year, and the ruins of this structure still stand,—crumbling brick walls surrounded by a grave-yard which has been more or less used down to the present time. The church building was damaged in the Revolution, but restored in 1794. The congregation had been greatly depleted, however, by a major migration of its members to Midway, Georgia, in 1752. Beginning with 1795, pastors were appointed by the Presbytery of South Carolina. After a Presbyterian church was built in Summerville, in 1831, worship alternated between the two for many years. The old church in Dorchester was abandoned in 1882. It was frequently called the White Meeting House. The name may refer to its whitened walls, but it may also be in memory of the Reverend John White, the "Patriarch" of Dorchester, England, the great-grandfather of John Wesley, and a member of the Assembly that framed the Westminster Confession of Faith. He helped to form the Massachusetts Bay Company for colonizing New England, and preached the farewell sermon for the colonists who went from his church and neighborhood in 1630 to found a new Dorchester in a new England. So we have an "apostolic succession" from Dorchester, England, to Dorchester, South Carolina.

We have digressed for a moment to outline the story of the neighboring church at Dorchester, contemporaneous for so many years with the Independent church in Charlestown. It is a striking testimony to the strongly religious and missionary spirit of Harvard in that period that these two young graduates, Pierpont and Adams, and then John Cotton, a graduate of mature experience, should have come to the young colony on the Ashley in the decade 1691-1700.



### PRESBYTERIAN LEADERSHIP

WITH the turn of the century there comes a period of Presbyterian leadership. The local congregation was composed, as we have said, of both Independents and Presbyterians, largely of the Scottish Church. At about this time a great colonizing expedition started from Scotland to the Isthmus of Darien. These people met great losses and ultimate failure. One of the ships called the "Rising Sun" made its way up the Atlantic coast to the harbor of Charlestown. On board this ship was one of the clergymen of that expedition, Rev. Archibald Stobo, and his wife. When the ship stopped at the bar to lighten itself before trying to come in, it became known in town that a Scottish minister was on board, and a delegation of three from the Independent church went down to the ship and induced him to come ashore and preach for them the following day. After the departure of Mr. Stobo to the shore a hurricane broke and the ship was wrecked upon the bar. It is said that not a soul survived. The minister did not hesitate to declare it a judgment of God upon the ship's crew and passengers for their wickedness, which he likens to Sodom. He writes to his friend, Reverend Mr. Borland: "I and my wife were scarce gone from her when wrath seized upon her and after our departure the storm came so sudden that none could find the way to her."

As the Charlestown church had been without a pastor since the death of Rev. John Cotton, they gladly called Mr. Stobo to take his place. His pastorate lasted for four years. His liberty-loving congregation soon became restive under his rigid determination to enforce compliance with the strict usages of the Church of Scotland. He remained in the colony, however,

and rendered half a century of service as minister and founder of Presbyterian churches. As early as 1710 a contemporary letter writer remarks that there are five. It is said of him by a near contemporary, Dr. Hewatt, that "he possessed those talents that render a minister conspicuous and respected. No minister of the colony ever engrossed so universally the public favor and esteem." There is a tradition that his sermons sometimes ran over the dinner hour and passed on into the afternoon service, but in colonial days this was by many considered not a fault but a virtue.\* One of his daughters married Archibald Bulloch, who migrated to Georgia and became provisional president of that colony and commander-in-chief of the military forces of that state in the Revolution. Bulloch was a great-grandfather of Theodore Roosevelt.

Following him (1704-1720) came another Presbyterian pastor, Rev. William Livingston of Ireland. George Howe, the historian, reminds us of the interchangeability of Presbyterians and Congregationalists at this period. At Plymouth, Massachusetts, there was an *Elder* Brewster, and the pastor was constantly assisted in his catechising and visitation by his *Elders*, a Presbyterian office. "We cannot suppose," says Howe, "that there had arisen among Dissenters in Charleston any special zeal on the subject of church government." The church in Charlestown was always independent, whether called Presbyterian or Congregational. It insisted all along that its pastor should not attempt to alter its independency, but it accepted the Westminster Confession of Faith.

It was in 1713, during the pastorate of William Livingston, that valuable records of the church, which would have thrown

\* A story is told of Mr. Stobo that Solomon Legaré, one of his Huguenot parishioners, once remonstrated on the length of his sermons, suggesting that the pastor cut them in half, using the second half for the afternoon service, so that his hearers might go home for the dinner hour. As this resulted in a longer sermon than usual on the following Sunday, Mr. Legaré rose up before the sermon was over and started down the aisle. The pastor remarked very distinctly, "Leetle Peetchers are soon filled." Mr. Legaré replied: "You've said enough to fill all the cisterns in Charlestown," and went on his way home. Returning after dinner, he found the sermon still continuing. From *Biographical Sketches of the Huguenot Solomon Legaré and of His Family Extending Down to the Fourth Generation of His Descendants* by Eliza C. K. Fludd.

light on its beginnings, were lost in a hurricane, as described above (page 4).

It was at the very beginning of this pastorate, October 20, 1704, that Frances Simonds gave her deed to the church property, and seven days later entered the yard and formally turned over "full and peaceable possession and seizin thereof to Robert Fenwick in the name of all the grantees." Besides this, in her will and testament dated December 6, 1707, she bequeaths to the church her plot of garden ground lying east of the church lot, thus extending the church lot toward what is now St. Philip's church-yard, as shown in a plot of 1730. In another item she gives "one silver cupp markt H.S." (her husband's initials). This cup is mentioned as in possession of the church as late as 1824, but has since disappeared. Her will also stated that her house and land are to be given to the church "in case Frances Northall or Carter Collis shall dye without heirs." The church did not receive this property. Another curious item is this: "I will that a cedar plank be laid on my husband's grave; and one on my son's: and that when I shall be buried that the open Place of the burial-place shall be walled up with brick." Robert Fenwick and Eliza Bedon were named executors. The place to be walled up with brick is believed to be the tomb, now ivy-covered, standing southeast of the present church building and near the Peronneau tombstones. This tomb is doubtless the oldest in the yard and in the city.

The first call extended to a minister recorded in the register is addressed to Rev. Nathan Bassett after correspondence with Rev. Messrs. Coleman and Cooper of Boston. It is dated by the clerk 1724. The formal fashion of the letter is of interest.

"IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST: AMEN.

We the members of the Presbyterian Church in Charles Town, and others resorting to this Public Place of Worship . . . . being very satisfied of your ability and Capacity to take upon you the Pastoral Charge of Us . . . . do humbly beseech and invite you, the Re'd Nathan



Bassett, to accept and take you the Office and Charge of a Minister or Pastor over us, to administer unto Us God's Holy Word and Ordinances; and to do whatever else appertain or anyways belong to a Minister of the Gospel. And on our part we do Solemnly promise and declare in the Presence of God and this Congregation that We will at all Time endeavor to behave and carry ourselves towards You, as becomes Christians to do towards a Minister of Jesus Christ; and as you will dispense unto Us your Spiritual things, so We shall not be wanting constantly to administer unto you of our Temporal. Humbly desiring that you'll please to accept of this our call and invitation." . . .

(The letter is signed by forty-three men of the congregation, whose names are printed in the Year Book of the City of Charleston for 1882, page 374.)

Two years later Robert Fenwick and his wife Sarah gave two and a half lots for the use of the Presbyterian minister for a parsonage. These lots were bounded on the east by the "little Street that leadeth from Ashley River," now known as King Street, "Westward upon a Street new-laid out" (Archdale), "Northward upon the lots of Capt. Henry Simonds." This land is now the Unitarian church property. An interesting memorandum on the back of this release says that by the term "Presbyterian minister in Charlestown" is to be understood that "General Character of Presbyterian, Congregational or Independent Minister according to the true Intention of Me the Subscriber." That is, in those days Presbyterian and Congregational and Independent were general and interchangeable terms used for the same church and minister. It was only five years later that an out-and-out, thoroughgoing Presbyterian church was organized by those who withdrew from the older body to form the Scotch Presbyterian Church, which should be unalterably Presbyterian in form and doctrine.

## A SECOND BUILDING AND PRESBYTERIAN SEPARATION

Until 1730 the undivided congregation worshipped in a little square brick building, forty feet on a side. We have already remarked on the probable date of this building, which appears on a map of Charleston of 1704. The following sub-



scription paper from the records supplies the statements which indicate its early origin.

Dec. 18, 1729. WHEREAS the present Public Meeting-House in Charles Town which in early times or *beginning of the Settlement thereof*, was built for the Publick Worship of God after the Presbyterian form and discipline, is now by long Time gone to Decay and become very Old and out of Repair: AND WHEREAS by God's Blessing not only the Inhabitants of said Town are increased, but by the vast growth of our Trade a great number of Seafaring persons come to and frequent this Port; so that the said Meeting House is found to be too small and inconvenient to receive and contain the whole Number of People which repair thither for Worship: and it being the General Desire of the Congregation that the said Meeting-House should be enlarged, rebuilt and accommodated to the purpose aforesaid: in pursuance thereof Col'l Miles Brewton, Mr. George Ducat, Mr. Robert Tradd, Mr. Joseph Moody, and Thomas Lamboll were proposed as Persons fit and proper to be intrusted with the said Work.

So, with the advice of the minister, elders, and chief of the congregation, these men were duly appointed. The paper concludes: "We therefore whose names are hereto subscribed, being excited by a true and sincere zeal for the Glory of God and the Advancement of Piety and Religion, Do each and every one of us on our parts hereby testifie and declare our Approbation of the said Undertaking . . . and Do severally promise to pay . . . the sums hereto subscribed by each of us. . . . Moreover we do earnestly invite all other Christians and well-disposed Persons to extend their Charitable Assistance and Help as it shall please God to move and incline their Hearts."

Then follows a list of 104 persons subscribing from £100 down to £1-10 shillings. One Andrew Allan adds a piece of land valued at £150 to his £100 subscription. The total was £3169 current, of which only £138 was not marked paid. A second subscription eight months later added £2959, given by 56 persons, of whom 31 gave twice and two persons gave three times, making a list of 89 and a total gift of £6127-15 sh., plus the carpenter work of Joseph Moody, who put up "36 pannell of fence around the North and West Side of the Yard." This building was of oblong shape, 40 feet by 62½

feet, with a tower added at the front or west end. It was ready for occupancy by November, 1732, and, with some enlargements and alterations, was in use until the new circular church was built, 1804-06.

The separation of twelve families to form the Scotch Presbyterian Church is not referred to in the records at this time except by the following memorandum: "The new Wooden Presbyterian Meeting-House, in Charles Town, scituate to the South'd of Tradd St. was first preached in the twenty third day of June, 1734, Mr. Hugh Stewart Min'r." Some years later, in the official letter of 1750 sent to London to the Reverend Doctors, John Guise, P. Doddridge, and David Jennings, a brief résumé of the history of the Independent church is given. This letter states that, after having a minister from Scotland (Archibald Stobo) who was strongly attached to the Scotch Presbyterian government, "some uneasiness arose and continued," though his successor was a minister from Ireland "more moderate in respect to church government" (William Livingston). He was succeeded by a minister from New England (Nathan Bassett), also a moderate man (a Congregationalist) "tho' he associated with the ministers of and sat in the Presbytery." "In his time," the letter continues, "our Brethren of the Scotch Nation thought fit to Separate themselves and Build a distinct Meeting-House about eighteen Years since: and have their Ministers for it from Scotland only."

## THE FIRST NATIVE-BORN PASTOR

**I**N 1734 the church called Rev. Josiah Smith, evidently to be co-pastor with Nathan Bassett, who died in 1738. David Ramsay, in his "History of the Independent or Congregational Church," written in 1814, says of this Josiah Smith that he was the grandson of Thomas Landgrave Smith, and the first native of Carolina who obtained a degree from a college, which he received from Harvard in Cambridge in 1725. Dr. Ramsay writes of him that when the Reverend George Whitfield was forbidden to preach in the Episcopal churches of South Carolina, Mr. Smith opened to him his church, and in a sermon afterwards declared his decided approbation of that eloquent and indefatigable preacher, using as a text the words of Elihu in the book of Job: "I will answer also my part; I will also show my opinion." After the death of Mr. Bassett the congregation sent the first of their very illuminating letters to ministers in London asking that a pastor be sent to them. In this they speak of their present pastor (Mr. Smith) as "finding himself incapacitated through constitutional weakness for so great a charge" and therefore declining their call to the sole pastorate. The minister sent out from London, James Parker,\* died after only two years, in 1742, and in that year a second call was extended to Josiah Smith, who remained in the pastoral relation until 1750. In the latter part of that time he suffered three strokes of palsy, or paralysis, from which he never recovered sufficiently to be

\* James Parker was of Leicester, England, educated under Dr. Latham, ordained in London, and pastor for five years at Gravesend. He was sent over at the suggestion of Isaac Watts, the hymn writer. His widow remained in Charlestown and married George Inglis. His grave-stone is now against the rear wall of the church.



able to articulate distinctly, though he continued to compose and print sermons. In 1781, when Charlestown surrendered to the British, he was compelled by them to go into exile at the age of 77. He reached Philadelphia safely, but shortly after died there, and was buried with particular honor within the Arch Street Presbyterian Church, being laid between the remains of his two friends, Rev. Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Finley, late president of Princeton College. His son Josiah, who lived to a great age and was well known to Dr. Ramsay, gives these details.

It may be said here that it was the long disability of Rev. Josiah Smith that suggested the desirability of providing a permanent fund for the support of elderly and disabled ministers of this church. This was done in 1789 by the organization of a society now briefly known as the Clergy Society, which has been an important factor in the financial history of the church and is one of the first organizations in America for the relief of aged ministers and their families.

#### LETTERS TO LONDON

Just what a church desired of its minister in the mid-eighteenth century is set down in a letter to London in 1738. "We flatter ourselves," the letter runs, "that you will be able to secure us some learned, bright and popular preacher"; they further suggest that a "strong, audible voice, a clear and distinct pronounciation, good elocution joined with a decent deportment of body in the pulpit, an affable temper in conversation, and great moderation in principles (particularly in church discipline), will greatly recommend a man to us, and are qualifications (some of them) of such consequence that we are of the opinion that the want of them will frustrate the intention of our application to you and threaten the ruin of our whole society." As compensation they offered one hundred pounds sterling per annum "for five years certain," the use of the house and ground provided as parsonage, and the Negro boy "Boston," "appropriated to the ministry of our



particular congregation." They also offered to pay his expenses over, and, after a year, if there was dissatisfaction on either side, his expenses back to Europe. A note was added to the letter saying that one or two members of the society will probably be in London within a few months, and they will add any further information desired. As a result of this letter Rev. James Parker came over in 1740, but his pastorate was terminated in two years by death, as noted above. Toward 1750 Rev. Josiah Smith was granted a year's leave of absence for the recovery of his health, but without much result. When it became necessary to secure a new pastor, the terms and method of the call were definitely agreed upon. One stipulation was that "Every Pastor hereafter elected shall (besides his Ordination to the Ministry) be Publicly installed as such in their Church or Meeting-house by one or more Ministers of the same Form, before He shall be Reputed Pastor or Minister thereof." On the same date the society is referred to as the "Church of Christian Protestant Dissenters of the Congregational or Presbyterial Form in Charles Town."

The second letter to London ministers, dated March 1, 1750, refers to the origin of the Province of South Carolina, and says that its charter to Earl Clarendon and others, having granted liberty of conscience, "induced divers Protestant subjects of England and Scotland who could not in conscience conform to the Established Church to become Adventurers over hither." It adds that sundry laws have since confirmed that "Liberty of Conscience to all Protestant Dissenters." The liberality of this church as to form is further shown in the statement: "Should anybody alledge that we cannot be Presbyterian who do not exactly keep up to and perform all things practised in the government of the Church of Scotland, and therefore term us Congregationals or Independents, we will not contend about it nor censure this or that form, and shall wish to have a minister of such catholic and charitable principles as our Church professes." The liberal attitude of mind evidenced by this church over one hundred and ninety years ago is notably tolerant for that period and in striking

accord with the liberal principles of the present. The letter recites the unfortunate dissension in the church over the call of Samuel Fairweather, a young man "designed for the ministry but not ordained," who had then departed from the province, and adds that the members and supporters have now largely come together again and unite in this appeal. This letter refers to the rule unanimously agreed upon that a call can only be extended by a two-thirds majority of the freemen who are members of the church and have been supporters thereof likewise for the two years immediately before. It is added that besides maintaining the pastor by subscriptions and the rent of pews, there is a "handsome fund which has accrued by pious donations." The letter concludes with the hope that the minister sent from England may be "a man of moderation and charity possessed of those other gifts which you know to be necessary for the Christian and the Divine; that his life may adorn his profession and he may feed us knowledge and understanding."

This letter was signed by Joseph Moody, John Stone, Thomas Lamboll, Henry Peronneau, Alexander Peronneau, Solomon Legaré, John Dart, Anthony Mathewes, and Isaac Holmes. In spite of the generosity of the proposed settlement and the high standing of the ministers addressed, they received no answer whatever. One cannot but suspect that, after the early death of the last minister sent over, possible candidates may have been apprehensive of the health conditions of Charlestown at that period. After waiting twenty-one months they sent a second letter, and finally, after two years, they wrote to Rev. George Whitfield, telling him of their pastorless condition and begging his assistance in the matter. Not until December 9, 1753, is there any indication that a possible minister was heard of. Then Rev. James Edmonds, who had preached in Cainhoy, South Carolina, was engaged as a lecturer for six months.

On the nineteenth of May, 1754, it was resolved that a subscription paper be prepared and sent about to enable the deacons of the church to purchase "Silver-Plate for the Ad-

ministration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." On the same date the managers of the church were authorized to procure a pall for funerals, to be kept by the sexton and let out by him at the usual allowance. A second minister was called in 1757 as co-pastor with James Edmonds, who had been ordained and settled. The new pastor was Rev. William Hutson, who remained until his death in 1761. Descendants of William Hutson are now living in South Carolina.

### ENGLISH PASTORS

At a meeting of the members and supporters of the church in August, 1759, it was shown that an addition to the building was much needed, as there was not a single vacant pew, and many persons had made application for pews which could not be granted. With but one dissenting vote, Thomas Lamboll's, it was voted to make an addition. This was added to the east end in such way and extent that a certain pillar at pew 15 should become the center of the church, and the pulpit was moved and placed against this pillar. As the church was 40 feet wide and was extended to the rear, there can be little doubt that the brick foundation now plainly visible above the ground at the rear of the present church is the old foundation built for the addition in 1759. It is just 40 feet wide and 90 feet from the front, thus making the enlarged church 90 feet long. The cost was a little over £2579, of which £1720 was raised by the subscriptions of sixteen men and the balance was taken from funds in the hands of the trustees.

Three ministers of this period, Edmonds, Hutson, and Bennett, were all Englishmen by birth. James Edmonds remained pastor until 1767, when he moved to Newport, Georgia; he afterwards became an itinerant minister in Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. He became blind, and died in Charleston in 1794 at the age of seventy-one. William Hutson came from England in 1740. He preached in Georgia, Prince William's Parish, and in the Dissenting church at Stony Creek, South Carolina. David Ramsay says



of him, "He was an eloquent preacher, an exemplary Christian, and an accomplished gentleman." By his first wife he had two sons, Richard and Thomas, and four daughters, one of whom married Colonel Isaac Hayne. Ramsay records that on July 4, 1814, fifty-three years after Mr. Hutson died and a few yards from where he had regularly preached, "his great grandson, Robert Y. Hayne, Esq., inheriting the genius and eloquence of his venerable ancestor, delivered an oration on the anniversary of the independence of the United States, which for correct patriotic American sentiments, for thoughts that breathe and words that burn has seldom been equalled." Mr. Hutson's tomb-stone in the church-yard bears an interesting epitaph, partly in Latin, partly in English, and a portrait bust which doubtless resembles his actual appearance.

Rev. Andrew Bennett, educated in England, came to Charlestown from Philadelphia, where he had been assistant preacher at the Presbyterian church on Market Street. After two years in Charlestown he went, in 1763, to Bermuda, and later to the Barbados, where he died in 1804. He is said to have had continued ill health, which greatly hindered his usefulness. Having no family, he bequeathed \$2,000 to the Clergy Society of his old church in Charlestown.

In spite of the failure to secure a pastor from London in 1750, in 1763 we find the officers of the church again addressing a long letter to two London pastors, Thomas Gibbon and Samuel Pike, requesting their aid in finding a second minister to work with James Edmonds. They write: "The state of circumstances of our Church are such as to require the constant labor of two ministers at once. . . . We have not the least encouragement to send to any of the Northern Colonies, because we have too much reason to believe it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to procure one there who would be suitable to this place, and whose sentiments would accord with ours both in Doctrine and Discipline. Our congregation is by no means a small one & the Performance of the Ministerial duty in its various Branches, is much too hard, in this warm Climate for one Minister alone." They add, "If the

Almighty should lay an afflicting hand on one, we have too much reason to fear that our Interest would decline and perhaps come to total Ruin," before another minister could be secured. In view of the number of years it took to secure some ministers there is much to be said for this point of view.

The kind of man they want they describe as "A Modern Calvinist . . . who knows how to keep at a proper distance in his Preaching and Practice from Bigottry and Indifference." They hope and pray that one can be found who is "experimentally acquainted with a crucified Saviour and (has) Zeal-our to promote his Glory among us." While they do not expect a minister "free from all imperfection," they would be glad to receive "a gentleman (if obtainable) who has an agreeable address in his preaching and conversation, solid judgment and pathetic delivery, an affable temper etc." They evidently felt that no colony could supply what they wanted, and therefore applied to metropolitan London.

Possibly their high requirements made it difficult to find even in London a man who was willing to travel to the distant colonial town. During the long period of waiting, from May, 1763, to April, 1767, the church twice offered an increase of fifty pounds in the salary, making it £200, with the prospect that a parsonage would be built. In April, 1765, they also turned to Philadelphia and offered to call Rev. John Rogers. In 1767 they finally secured Rev. John Thomas, a native of Wales, a young man unordained. In good Congregational order they arranged his ordination by a local council consisting of Rev. Josiah Smith, Rev. John J. Zubly (then pastor of the Independent church in Savannah and formerly pastor of the Wappetaw Congregational church), and Rev. James Edmonds, convening May 22, 1767. On the seventh of June he was installed.

We are not informed by the records as to the ceremony of ordination, but we may be sure that a vigorous doctrinal examination of the candidate by the ministers preceded the laying on of hands. The installation was the joint act of pastor and people. It was preceded by a formal call unanimously

agreed to and signed by nineteen male communing members on the thirty-first of May, 1767. It is of the same tenor and phraseology as the letter sent to Nathan Bassett in 1724 (see page 17). On Sunday afternoon, the seventh of June, in the presence of a very large congregation, just before the singing of the last Psalm, the Rev. John Thomas was solemnly installed as pastor of this church by the Rev. Josiah Smith. The call was publicly read by Mr. Smith, and Mr. Thomas gave his answer in the following letter:

“ Christian Brethren and Friends:

As you have by the subscription of your Hands without any coercive Methods or unjust Proceedings, joined to signify to me in the call just read your unanimous Desire that I should take upon me the Pastoral Charge of the Church, I with gratitude accept of your kind Proposal. Without Flattery I esteem it an Honour to be chosen by so worthy and judicious a Society of people. I most humbly thank you for the Honour you promise me as a Minister. My highest Ambition will be to prove Serviceable to you. And it will give me singular Satisfaction to see the Life of Godliness, the Power of our Holy Religion, to see Peace, Harmony and Unanimity prevailing among you. My Life and all my Capacities are yours, as long as Providence shall order our Continuance together. I desire a share in your prayers; most sincerely wish your Number may be increased and your Edification promoted. . . .

Sirs

Your most obedient humble Serv't  
For Christ's Sake

John Thomas

In this account of an installation the reader may see all the essentials of the Congregational procedure in establishing pastoral relations; both pastor and people act with initiative, and their action is final.

Mr. Thomas's early death at the age of twenty-six was due to his assiduous devotion to the salvation and care of a man condemned to death for a crime. Mr. Thomas believed him to be truly penitent. To save the man's body after execution from dissection he had it transferred to James Island on a cold March night, and there performed the funeral service at



the grave at 10 P.M. Mr. Thomas was immediately seized with a violent cold, which rapidly led to consumption and resulted in his death in the following summer. While on leave of absence for his health in Philadelphia he had been commissioned by the church to look for another minister, and before he died there he had induced Rev. William Tennent of Connecticut to become his successor. After this it was found that eminently satisfactory ministers could be found in those "Northern Colonies." No more letters were sent to London.

The church sent thirty pounds to the North to defray the funeral expenses of Mr. Thomas. The venerable Josiah Smith said of him in a funeral sermon: "As a man his judgment was solid and piercing, he had good taste and a relish for polite learning. As a minister he prayed as a seraph; his compositions were methodical and rational, he was a man of fire and pungency; his principles were sound and orthodox; a thorough Calvinist, though much on the side of liberty and moderation and loved good men of all persuasions; yet he would contend for the primitive faith and purity." \* He left two daughters, one of whom married Samuel Beach, Esq., and the other Adam Gilchrist, merchant.

\* Quoted from David Ramsay's *History of the Independent or Congregational Church*.

WILLIAM TENNENT PLANS  
NEW TYPE OF CHURCH

REV. WILLIAM TENNENT, JR., one of the most notable of the pastors of this church, began his work April 12, 1772. He was of the third generation in the line of a distinguished family of clergymen ranking high in both religion and literature in the mid-Atlantic colonies, where they held pastorates. He was born in 1740 at Freehold, New York, graduated at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) in 1758, received the degree of A.M. from Harvard in 1763, and was ordained in 1762 or 1763. He was called from Norwalk, Connecticut, where he was junior pastor for about seven years. He retained his membership in the New Brunswick Presbytery of New Jersey, but was installed in his Norwalk pastorate by Congregational procedure. Being called to Charlestown January 8, 1772, he was dismissed from his charge with great reluctance, both in the church and in the Consociation to which he belonged in Connecticut.

After only six months in Charlestown he came forward with a clear and cogent appeal for the erection of a second church. He asserted that there was not room enough in the churches of the city for more than two thirds of the white population; that pews sold as high as £1900 in the Church of England; that people were finding it not possible to attend church unless "they imposed themselves on the real estate of others"; that the Independent church was too full for any additional pew-holders; that there was already a list of applications for pews in a new building. "The Dissenting Interest," he said, "should have an opportunity to grow; we are to be considered a frontier; another generation will see Charlestown

doubled (if God hath not determined to blast it).” “Indeed unless you build, where must your children go when they get families, if there is no room for them in the church?” he queried. He clinched his argument with the announcement that £7000 was already subscribed, provided the plan should be adopted. It was adopted with but one opposing vote. The estimated cost of the proposed building was £13,000. Both the old and the new houses were to belong to one society. The church business was to be voted by the members and supporters as one body, and the old house on Meeting Street was to be used for their meetings. There were to be two preachers, each one preaching every Sunday in both buildings, so that each congregation should have the privilege of hearing both pastors every Sunday. Thus each pastor would deliver his sermon twice in one day to two different congregations.

It is interesting to note the plans by which the double pastorate was to be financed. A summary made in December, 1772, showed that by an increase to be made in pew rents there would be a total from this source of £1250, and £1050 from invested funds, making £2300 current. Mr. Tennent’s salary was £1400 plus £500 for house rent (no parsonage had been built); £150 was allowed for the clerk and sexton (one person) and for repairs. This left £250 to go toward a salary for the proposed new pastor; £300 more was promised “by a private hand,” and there remained a balance of £850 to be raised by subscription, to make the £1400 to be paid a second minister. A “pound current” was equivalent to about 71 cents, making £1400 about equal to \$1000.

After about two years of discussion the new building was started on the parsonage lot on Archdale Street. In January came a generous offer of the adjoining land fronting on King Street, given by Mr. Josiah Smith (not the minister, but his son), deacon and for over fifty years treasurer of the church, and by Mrs. John Thomas, widow of the former pastor and daughter of Thomas Lamboll. This gift provided further income to be set aside for a co-pastor. The land was partly occupied by tenant buildings, but it was provided that “a large



opening be left by which to see and to pass to the new building from King Street."

### AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH DEFINED

Another notable event in the history of the church occurred at this time, culminating in the adoption, on February 5, 1775, of a constitution and platform defining the character of the church. Certain resolutions proposed by Mr. Tennent were referred to a committee of six men, increased to eight, who after a study of the records reported certain findings which were unanimously adopted.

The first sentence of the report is of a negative nature, but important: "This Church never has adopted any one distinguishing Name, Platform or Constitution in a formal manner, nor declared of what denomination of Dissenters it is; but suffered itself to be called either Presbyterian, Congregational or Independent, sometimes by one of these names, sometimes by two of them, and other times by all three."

This explains why this church was called both Presbyterian and Congregational, not only in successive periods, but at one and the same time. It never was a member of the presbytery even after there was one to join. After the secession, in 1731, of the strict Presbyterians who formed the Scottish Church it tended to be called Congregational or Independent only. It is a matter of history that the words were used interchangeably in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mr. C. K. Ship-ton of Boston, a research student of this period, author of the recent "Harvard Biographies," writes:

The seventeenth century ministers here (in the colonies) would have said that they were ordained in the presbyterian manner over churches of the congregational polity. They usually called themselves Independents or Congregationalists, but they would have laid claim to being Presbyterians. At the time of the Great Awakening (1738 and following years) the New Lights took the name of Presbyterian in New England, pretty clearly because they liked the wild preaching and strict theology of the Scotch preachers who were coming in. Then for the first time there was a real distinction between the Congregational and Presby-

# In the Name of Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

We the Members of the Presbyterian Church in this  
Town, and others resorting to this <sup>Presbytery</sup> Church.  
Worship, having made our Application, <sup>to</sup> Mess<sup>rs</sup> Coleman  
and Cooper, Ministers of the Gospel in Boston, to send  
us a Pious, Able, Ordained, Presbyterian Minister, and  
they having prevailed with you the Reverend M<sup>r</sup> Nathan  
Bassett, to come amongst us. We therefore being  
very well satisfied of your Ability and Capacity to take upon  
you the Pastoral Charge of us, not only from the Character  
given of you, by the Reverend Gentlemen above-mentioned  
but by our own Experience, Do humbly beseech to invite  
you the Rev<sup>d</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Nathan Bassett, to accept and take  
upon You the Office and Charge of a Minister or Pastor  
over us, to administer unto us God's holy Word and Co-  
municances; and to do and perform whatsoever else does  
appertain, or any way, belong to a Minister of the Gospel.  
And on our part We do solemnly promise and declare  
in the Presence of God and this Congregation, that We will  
at all Times endeavour to behave and carry our selves  
towards you, as becomes Christians to do to a Minister of  
Jesus Christ, and as you will dispense unto us your  
Pastoral things, so We shall not be wanting carefully  
to attend unto you of our Personals. Humbly desiring  
that you'll please to accept of this our Call to Pastorate.  
John Scuttsburgh. John Summers  
John Carmichael. Sam. Everleigh  
John Fraser. Garth Wilson  
John Gallant. Henry Townsend  
John Ellis. Abraham Legare  
John May. Timothy Ballou

We the subscribers promise, that while we survive, with  
the Independent or Congregational Church of this  
and a faithful, we will conduct ourselves according to  
the precepts and regulations, agreeably to their  
use in the Christian Ministry.

1 Daniel Legare	John Edwards	D
2 Joseph Cooper	Samuel Ross	D
3 Lewis Foster	William Miller	D
4 Triak Smith	William Smith	D
5 John Ballou	John Smith	F
6 James T. Thomson	Saml. Ballou	+
7 John Jones	Saml. Smith	+
8 David Canby	Saml. W. DeLapierre	+
9 Asa Thompson	Saml. W. DeLapierre	+
10 Asa Thompson	Adam Gilling	+
11 Asa Thompson	Thos. Douglass	+
12 Asa Thompson	D. DeLapierre	D
13 Asa Thompson	John Parker	D
14 Asa Thompson	Thomas Legare	+
15 Asa Thompson	Saml. Jones	+
16 Asa Thompson	John Parker	+
17 Asa Thompson	John Brodhead	D
18 Asa Thompson	John Brodhead	D
19 Asa Thompson	John Brodhead	D
20 Asa Thompson	John Brodhead	D

## EARLY DOCUMENTS

Left: From the call of Nathan Bassett. This document was signed in 1724 by  
forty-two men of the congregation.

Right: List of signatures of forty-one men covenanting together in support of the  
Independent or Congregational Church.



ISAAC S. KEITH  
Pastor 1788-1813, Co-Pastor  
with William Hollinshead



BENJAMIN M. PALMER  
Pastor 1814-35



terian camps in New England, but until after the Revolution ministers passed easily from one to the other. There were no separate organizations. In the southern and middle colonies the Dissenters usually took the name Presbyterian because of the large proportion of Scotch among them. They differed in no way from the New England churches until they were swamped by the Scotch.

The only rules or orders in the report are regarding the choosing, installing, and suspension of pastors. This important function was put into the hands of the communicants of the church who were also pew-holders of at least two years' standing. Supporters, not communicants, had a voice in the choice of assistant ministers, which might be negatived by the "voice of the pastor and two-thirds of the communicants." This was changed, first, to put the calling or dismissal of a pastor into the hands of the communicants by a two-thirds vote; second, to decide the matter by a majority vote of the whole supporting congregation (male members voting). Only those who had been supporting or communing members for three half-years had the right to vote or hold office. The old plan of having three managers in charge of the current business of the church was continued. There was also, after 1747, a board of four or more trustees in charge of legacies or other donations to the church. These took the place of separate trustees for separate funds, and their number was increased to eleven.

In order to make very clear the position of this church the report of 1775 goes on to say: "It seems that the main thing this Church has had in view since 1732 was not so much to define exactly the particular mode of their Discipline and to bind up their hands to any one stiff form adopted either by Presbyterians, Congregationals or Independents,—as to be upon a *broad Dissenting Bottom* and to leave themselves as free as possible from all foreign Shackles, that no moderate persons of either Denomination might be afraid to join them. This free and liberal plan has been so much in their view that for many years they would not take any Name at all: but considered themselves only as a certain Society of Christians Worshipping in a Brick Meeting House; and had no hesita-

tion about the Denomination of their Minister so he was a protestant, Paedo-Baptist Dissenter from the Church of England, a moderate Man, and willing to leave them free; and it appears that if they have adopted the word *Congregational*, it is with no other Idea than that they acted as a Congregation disconnected from all others, not supposing themselves on account of this Name bound up to every stiff Rule laid down by a Meeting at the Savoy, or at Cambridge in New England. They have never bound their hands by the Savoy or Cambridge Platform any more than by the Westminster Directory, reserving it in their own hands from time to time to act as their Circumstances and Consciences might require in their disconnected situation."

Their idea of the constitution of a church seems to correspond to the British Constitution. They want "no absolute or invariable form, but to act upon the freest and most liberal principles as occasion may serve and edification may direct." Thus the church assumes a position of complete ecclesiastic independence. It actually belonged to no denomination. It does not seem to have been theologically liberal in the modern sense, but a completely isolated unit with a natural leaning toward the Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

An old but undated note written on the margin of the records opposite the sentence last quoted says "not true now." A stricter constitution was in time adopted, rules of procedure have been elaborated, but the spirit of independence has always been fundamental. The church did not come into working relations with the Congregational denomination for over a hundred years after this — in the pastorate of Henry M. Grant. In recent years the church has not hesitated to adopt an entirely new constitution and a statement of faith modern in its outlook and broad in its ecclesiastical relationships. It is significant to find that, in that period which achieved independence from Great Britain for the colonies, there was a church in Charleston declaring independence for itself while standing alone in the Southland and opening its doors wide to all who were of like spirit.

The historian of South Carolina, David Ramsay, a member of this church, writes in his history of it in 1814: "From this document it appears that the church is a free ecclesiastical democracy. It has neither vestrymen, elders, or any other order of men who have pre-eminence." An official list of voting members drawn up at this time shows sixty-two men, twenty of whom are designated "communing members." The lack of sectarianism in the church is aptly characterized by Mr. Ramsay in a sentence in which he says of this church: "It was never so much its intention to build up any one denomination of Christians, as to build up Christianity itself."



## WILLIAM TENNENT AND DISESTABLISHMENT

THIS being the spirit of the church, it is not surprising that its aggressive young pastor, William Tennent, should have taken the lead in the movement for the disestablishment of the Church of England in the colony. All Dissenters labored under great disadvantages. "They had to build their own houses of worship," says Ramsay, "and maintain their own ministers, while they were taxed in common with the other inhabitants for the expense of building Episcopal churches and supporting Episcopal ministers. The churches of Dissenters were not recognized by law, and they had no means of holding property except by the intervention of trustees."

On account of his ardent spirit and distinguished talents Mr. Tennent became so popular that, contrary to custom, he was elected by common consent a member of the Provincial Congress and later a member of the Assembly. Public business was often conducted on the Lord's Day, so that he would sometimes be heard on the same Sunday "both at the church and at the state house, addressing different audiences with equal animation on their spiritual and temporal interests." While he rarely introduced politics into the pulpit, he put his whole soul into the Revolution. So it came about most naturally that he was an ardent advocate both of the independence of the Dissenting churches from the Church of England and of the colonies from the Crown of England. He drew up a petition in favor of equal religious liberty for all churches in the colony, united the different denominations in its support, and secured the signatures of several thousand people from

various towns in South Carolina. As a member of the Assembly in Charlestown, January 11, 1777, after the declaration of political independence, he presented this petition, with an eloquent speech in its support which went far toward securing the adoption of disestablishment in the first state constitution of 1778, confirmed in the constitution of 1790. This speech has been preserved entire and is printed in Ramsay's little book on the history of the church. Unfortunately this pastor's fruitful life came to an end before the constitution was adopted and before national independence was achieved.

In this famous speech Mr. Tennent contended that ecclesiastical establishments were an infringement on civil liberties; that toleration of Dissenters was not enough; that an exclusive religious establishment discouraged the growth of a free state. He showed that in ten years the public treasury had contributed 164,000 pounds to the support of the Church of England, and that its estate in the colony was worth over 330,000 pounds. Yet the Dissenters constituted half or more of the government, and their churches numbered 79 to 20 of the established churches. The petition asked that there should never be any establishment of any one denomination or sect of Protestants by way of preference to another, and that no Protestant inhabitant should ever be obliged by law to pay toward the maintenance of any form of religious worship which he had not joined or freely engaged to support, nor be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of religious principles.

The petitioners made no demand for the restoration of any of the property of the religious establishment, being content that it should remain the property of the Episcopal Church. The result of the petition and the discussion was Art. XXXVIII of the constitution of 1778, by which the "Christian Protestant" religion was declared to be the established religion of the state, and that all denominations were to enjoy equal religious and civil privileges. Provision was made that all religious societies of Christian Protestants numbering fifteen or more male persons of the age of twenty-one or over

should have the privilege of applying for incorporation and be constituted churches before the law. It was also provided as a basis of such incorporation that the society applying therefor should accept the following articles of faith:

1. That there is One Eternal God, and a future State of Rewards and Punishments.
2. That God is to be publicly Worshipped.
3. That the Christian Religion is the true Religion.
4. That the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are Divinely inspired, and are the rule of Faith and Practice.
5. That it is lawful and the Duty of every Man, being thereunto lawfully called by those that govern to bear witness to the Truthe.

It will be remembered that this state constitution of 1778 was enacted nearly a year after the death of William Tennent. One might question whether he would have advocated the establishment of the "Christian Protestant" religion; he had argued for toleration of all forms of Protestantism in organized churches. The adoption of a state creed in order to establish a state religion was perhaps natural, but unusual. The writer is not aware that any other of the states has ever had such a creed. Its composition suggests that it was composed by a layman or a lay committee, especially the last article, which seems to refer to testimony in court, "to bear witness to the Truthe," "being called by those that govern." It is to be noted that this act makes no provision for the Catholic Church. The act goes on to state also what shall be required of the minister in preaching and pastoral duties, and in Christian living. It forbids interference with public worship and exempts all citizens from taxation for the support of religious worship. This constitution was superseded by another in a few years.\*

In accepting these articles required by the state constitution the church thought it wise and necessary to add three articles of its own, covering "Scripture Doctrines of Grace" already held. The first article states the doctrine of the

\* The constitution of 1778 may be found printed in *American Charters and Constitutions*, by Thorpe, Vol. 6, p. 3048.



Trinity, the second the fall of man and the need of atonement, the third the substitutionary doctrine of the atonement. An application was immediately made to the state for incorporation, which was granted October 9, 1778. The same act included the Baptist Church in Charlestown, the Presbyterian Church of Bethel in Saint Bartholomew's Parish, the Presbyterian Church of Cainhoy in Saint Thomas's Parish, and the Presbyterian Church of Salem in Saint Mark's Parish. (These parish designations, early made under the Episcopal establishment, have continued in use.)

### WILLIAM TENNENT AND THE REVOLUTION

Besides these activities in regard to disestablishment Mr. Tennent rendered notable public service in helping to overcome the attitude of opposition to the Revolutionary cause which largely prevailed in the colony outside of Charlestown. In the summer of 1775 Mr. Tennent, at the request of the Council of Safety of South Carolina, and in company with Colonel William Drayton, went on an extensive expedition to many of the settlements of the up-country. The purpose of this journey was to secure the support and allegiance of the people to the Revolution. Many of them were Tories and strongly opposed. Mr. Tennent and Colonel Drayton travelled incessantly from place to place, meeting many large groups of hundreds of people and securing hundreds of signatures to the Association to support the colonial cause. Many of the more obstinate were brought over by personal conference. In the account of this journey, kept by Mr. Tennent, preserved by Dr. William S. Brown (late deacon of the church), and printed in the Charleston Year Book of 1894, we have his own account of the proceedings. Oftentimes the minister preached on Sundays and week days, following the sermon with a speech from one to three hours long on the "state of the country." At one point he writes, "The heat almost melted me, but had the pleasure to see all the people eagerly sign the Association, fully convinced of the necessity of it." He

adds, "Rode ten miles in the evening to Captain ——. If we can stand this we need fear nothing; but the inclemency of the skies was not to be compared to the fury of the inhabitants of the bed." Sleepless nights, sometimes spent on the floor of cabins, and indigestible food, added to the moral difficulties of his mission. He seems to have met ministerial opposition, the grossest ignorance and prejudice, but it may be said that the expedition broke the back of the opposition to the Revolutionary cause. "At one crowded assembly," he writes, "preached extempore with more freedom and ease than common. The people, though mostly opposed, appeared very affectionate. I gave them a discourse on the American dispute of nearly three hours. Its effect was very visible. The people holding a profound silence for more than a minute after I was done. . . . This day, it is hoped, has put an end to the strength of discord in this regiment." He speaks of making a survey of Fort Charlotte and giving orders for the completion of its repair, mounting the guns, etc. He reviewed the soldiers and militia at this point and "discoursed with them on the goodness of their cause. After proper exhortations, which they seemed to take very kindly, I prayed with them and took my leave." He adds, however, "Anxiety of mind on account of the madness of the opponents of liberty robbed me of sleep until the break of day."

He travelled as far as King's Mountain and to Ninety-Six, and crossed the Savannah River into Georgia territory. There was much hard riding, a runaway in which he was injured in the hip, difficult and dangerous fording of swollen rivers on flatboats; but nothing stopped his progress until he had completed his wide circuit. Before his return he writes of receiving "joyful news of General Gage's defeat and of the recovery of Boston from the hands of British privateers." He writes of the fortifications of Augusta, which rendered the inhabitants secure in the midst of savages. He mentions a bad dinner at Nicholas Tavern, where he ran into a band of detestable horse thieves. "It is easy to write novels," he observes, "if a man travels and describes nothing more than the truth."

On the last day of his journey, September 15, 1775, he writes: "Set out in the rain and rode through the greatest quantity of water that I ever remember to have seen; met with some small difficulties, but had them all compensated by the joy of my dear family and friends on my safe arrival."

The life of William Tennent was terminated all too soon by fever at the early age of thirty-seven (August 11, 1777), on the "High Hills of Santee" as he was bringing his aged and lately widowed mother from New Jersey to live in his home at Charlestown. He left five children, William and Charles, and three daughters who married respectively Charles Brown, Dr. Joseph Hall Ramsey, and Samuel Smith. His church erected a monument to his memory in their house of worship on Archdale Street, where it may still be seen in the vestibule. Although instrumental in bringing about the building, he never saw its completion. It was not till more than forty years after his death that the congregation worshipping in this building became Unitarian. Memorial addresses were given by two ministers in Charlestown, Mr. Allison and Mr. Hart. These were ordered printed by vote of the church, but the writer has found no copies of them.



## A NEW CONSTITUTION

**I**N September, 1775, a committee was appointed to revise the constitution of the church with particular reference to the dual arrangements rendered necessary by having two houses of worship. The committee consisted of John Edwards, Josiah Smith, Jr., Dr. David Ramsay, Richard Hutson, Thomas Legaré, Jr., James H. Thomson, and Edward Darrell. The report was brought in by Dr. Ramsay but not acted upon until January 1, 1778, when it was adopted. It is followed in the records by the actual signatures of forty-eight male members. The doctrinal articles (eight in number) were not acted upon at this time. As this is the authentic record of the constitution of a Congregational church of the Revolutionary period, and as it describes the unusual arrangements made for the worship and business of one church using two buildings and two pastors, I will insert a few articles:

No. 9. Divine service shall be performed in both Houses in the Manner that has heretofore been usual in this Church.

No. 10. In matters of Church Government we hold it to be our unalienable right as a Christian Church to govern ourselves in that which appears most expedient to our own members and most suitable to our Circumstances without controul in Ecclesiastical Matters from any Man or sett of Men, nevertheless we think it prudent to ask advice of such Protestant Dissenting Church and Ministers as to us seems proper.

No. 11. The title of this Society shall be the Independent or Congregational Church worshipping in Meeting and Archdale Streets.

No. 12. All Male White Persons of the age of Twenty one Years and upwards, who stately Worship with us, subscribe to these Rules and partake of the Lord's Supper, are to be considered as Voting Members in all the Spiritual Concerns of the Church, after the term of Three half years, if strangers, or one half year if descendants of Members or Supporters.

No. 13. [Provides similarly for "Supporters who worship statedly with us and pay pew rent or subscription of not less than ten pounds" and adds that a descendant from a member or supporter who left a legacy to the Church yielding ten pounds or more may not be required to pay his ten pounds annually.]

No. 15. They who desire to become Members of this Church, must privately satisfy the Pastor thereof of the Sincerity of their Faith and Repentance and then be proposed on some Sabbath preceding the Administration of the Lord's Supper, to the members desiring to tarry for that purpose; when if objected to they shall be balotted for by the Members, and if two-thirds are in their favour, they shall be permitted to communicate.

No. 16. There shall be Two Funds kept distinct and apart, one for each House, but both are to be under the direction of one Board of Trustees.

No. 17. Two Deacons for each House, Eleven Trustees, Two Treasurers (one for each Fund) Two Managers for each House, One Secretary, & Two Clerks and Sextons (one for each House) shall be chosen by the joint ballot of Members and Supporters on the First Sunday of September, and on every Second succeeding year, of which the Managers shall give due notice on the doors of both Houses etc.

No. 18. The Deacons are to provide the necessary Articles for the Communion, serve the Communicants therewith, to receive their Charitable Contributions, and dispose of them among the helpless Poor of the Congregation.

No. 19. The Trustees are to hold all the Property of the Church in their Name and to direct the Treasurers and Managers etc.

No. 20. The Treasurers are to be the immediate Possessors of all bonds, specialties and monies etc.

No. 21. The Managers are to collect Pew Rents every six Months, and pay it into the hands of the Treasurers, to keep in repair the Churches and Church Yards, and any Houses that belong to the Society, collect rents and let the houses, receive all applications for Pews and appropriate them where there is no dispute. When the Church is destitute of a Minister [they are] to supply the Pulpit with occasional Preachers.

The Secretary is to keep a Book of Records in which he must take minutes of all the proceedings of Church meetings. . . . A Church Meeting shall be called by the Managers whenever directed by any two Members or Supporters. . . .

No. 22. (Quorum 13 members or supporters)

No. 23. All Church Meetings shall be notified in both Houses but only held in Meeting Street; no Business however shall be enter'd upon 'till Divine service is over in Archdale Street.

No. 24. There shall be two Pastors to preach alternately in both Houses. . . .

No. 25. Whenever a Minister is to be voted for, or any means taken for his dismissal, the Members present at a Meeting shall be first lead to a Vote, and no further proceedings had in the premisses, unless two-thirds of their Number appear to be for the measure; but in case two-thirds do appear to be for it, then the whole Congregation of Members and Supporters present and qualified to Vote, shall be lead to Vote, and no proceedings be had thereon unless there appears a Majority of the whole for the Measure, which Majority is esteemed to be the decisive Voice of the Church.

No. 26. As we profess not to elect Pastors from any one denomination of Christians, if it should so happen that the Minister of our Choice shou'd have different Notions of Church government from what we hold he shall be at liberty to follow his own Judgment in all Matters that only concern himself, provided that he makes no attempt to introduce amongst us any of the peculiar Modes of the denomination to which he belongs, for the better prevention of which it shall be a standing form in all our Calls to Ministers, that they Accept the Charge of this Church according to the Constitution thereof.

No. 27. The denomination of this Church, the mode of performing Divine service therein, and the Government thereof by its own Members as stated in the 9th, 10th and 11th Articles, shall forever remain unalterable and no other part shall be altered but by the concurring Voice of two thirds of the Members and Supporters thereof.

No. 28. We the Subscribers promise that while we associate with the Congregational Church of Meeting and Archdale Streets, to conduct ourselves according to the preceding Rules and Regulations agreeable to their true intent, Spirit and Meaning.

The following forty-eight signatures were affixed to these articles:

Daniel Legaré	James Fisher	David Ramsay
John Scott	John Webb	George Mathewes
Joseph Roper	H. Swinton	Benj <sup>a</sup> . Mathewes
Josiah Smith	John Scott Jun <sup>r</sup>	Tho <sup>s</sup> Legaré
Nath <sup>l</sup> Russell	Wm. Wilkie	D. DeSaussure
Solomon Legaré	John Edwards J <sup>r</sup>	Nath <sup>l</sup> Cudworth
Edward Darrell	Stephen Lawrence	Samuel Smith
Thos. Doughty	Dan <sup>l</sup> Stevens	Samuel Miller
Jere <sup>h</sup> Hutchinson	H. S. Stevens	Job Palmer
Anth <sup>y</sup> Toomer	Samuel Beach	Rich <sup>d</sup> Waring
J. H. Thomson	Wm. Scott Jr.	Edw <sup>d</sup> Morgan



John Muncreaf  
Samuel Stent  
Isaac Holmes

George Morris  
Julius Legaré  
John Reid  
Rob<sup>t</sup>. Austen  
Jeremiah Rose  
Tho<sup>s</sup> Bennett

Thomas Martin  
Geo. Smith  
H. W. DeSaussure  
Jos. H. Ramsay  
Samuel Baldwin  
Nath<sup>l</sup> Morgan

## A LAYMAN'S CHURCH

During the period from 1778 to 1783 there was no settled pastor, though vigorous efforts were made to secure one. In one communication to the Presbytery of New York the officers of the church enlarge on the "melancholy state of religion . . . in times of general calamity . . . the much lamented death of Rev. Mr. Tennent . . . the extraordinary opportunity of preaching the doctrines of free grace . . . the infant state of learning among us, only two Carolinians (thus far) educated for the Gospel ministry. . . . No Seminary here for their training yet the majority of the inhabitants of this Town and State have always been Protestant Dissenters. . . . Hence the need of a man of learning and piety and established reputation to settle in this metropolis." Under the date of July 18, 1779, there is mention of inviting Mr. Edmonds, probably the former pastor, as supply to preach every Sunday morning. Twenty-five pounds is voted for each sermon preached in the vacant pulpit, and so on for three years. Then a call was prepared by "those of the trustees and supporters of the Church who were then in exile in the City of Philadelphia," to be sent in succession to three ministers, the last of whom was Rev. William Hollinshead, March 25, 1782.

They invited a new pastor to go with them on their return from exile. One is reminded of the Jewish exiles returning from Babylon, taking with them Ezra the Scribe. With perhaps a trace of exaggeration they declare that in Charlestown, the metropolis of an extensive country, there are thousands of souls who in spiritual matters know not their right hand from their left. They believed that "after peace is settled there will be a vast increase of inhabitants in this important

field." "We indeed," they go on, "though a destitute, are still an organized church, but a prodigious part of our country has never yet been formed into regular Societys for the worship of God." The letter recites the dearth of pastors in the country churches of South Carolina, which had often appealed to the ministers of our church for help and counsel, and adds that in the state of Georgia "there is not now one settled minister." So with much urgency for the "advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom" they feel that their call should take the precedence over the needs and comfort of the parish then being served in New Jersey. They "Beseech the great Head of the Church who holds the stars in His right hand that He will be pleased to enable you to determine on this call according to his most blessed Will."

This rather remarkable letter was signed by eighteen men, including four trustees, Josiah Smith, Thomas Legaré, Edward Darrell, and David Ramsay. One cannot but wonder if in our day one could find a church, already five years without a pastor, which could muster eighteen men in a distant city who could prepare a letter of such broad churchmanship and genuine spiritual concern for the church of their home city and the religious needs of their state. Josiah Smith, deacon of the church, is one of the prime movers; as one after another declines, he carries on the effort to secure a favorable reply. It is he who carries on the correspondence alone. When the call reached Rev. William Hollinshead (December 20, 1782), he seemed at first inclined to accept it, but on March 29 sent his "final resolution" not to accept. Thus the exiles were obliged to return to their home city without a pastor.

#### A PASTOR FOUND

The scene shifts back to Charleston,\* where the men of the church, with a few who had been in Philadelphia, gathered in the home of Mrs. Mary Lamboll Thomas (March 2, 1783) to consider the "deplorable state of the church by

\* It was in 1783 that the longer spelling Charlestown was officially changed to Charleston.

means of the destruction occasion'd there by the enemy during their possession of Charlestown." It was decided to raise funds by subscription to "repew" and "refloor" the church on Meeting Street, making the center aisle seven feet wide, replacing the pulpit that stood by the central pillar, and building new seats in the gallery. Indications are that the main door was on the south side. Permission was granted at this time to the "Firemasters of Charlestown" to build an engine house on the northeast corner of the church land. Then came the news (May 4) that Mr. Hollinshead had declined their call. But on June 1 Dr. Ramsay gave it as his opinion that Mr. Hollinshead might still be induced to become their pastor. They renewed the call, offering a salary of £200 sterling, house rent, and the cost of moving from the North. On August 3 Josiah Smith reports to the church that Mr. Hollinshead has accepted. He arrived on November 22 and held his first service on Thanksgiving Day, December 11, 1783.

Thus began a pastorate that lasted for thirty-four years. The church was in great disorder physically and financially; seven eighths of the funds of the society were locked up in the state treasury, owing to war conditions; the church bell was gone; pew rents would have to be increased, to meet their obligations to the new pastor and to raise the money for repairs. A special fund of sixty-two pounds was soon raised for the purchase of a bell to be imported from England. We learn also of a choir of young men called the Independent Choir, who asked the church for an addition to the choir seats so as to accommodate a number of young ladies and others willing to assist in performing church music. An interesting item records that a pew in St. Michael's Church was bequeathed to the trustees of this church (May 21, 1786). After a few years it was voted to sell this pew, as the assessments exceeded the income from rentals; but it was not sold until July 25, 1808, to Mrs. Eliza Troup. In 1786 plans were adopted for completing the Archdale Street church building; the walls had been built before the Revolution, but it had never been enclosed.



THE DUAL PASTORATE:  
HOLLINSHEAD AND KEITH

THE plan for having two co-equal pastors for two church buildings and two congregations, which originated with William Tennent in 1773, took definite shape in December, 1787, when Rev. Isaac Keith was called from Alexandria, Virginia, to be co-pastor with Dr. Hollinshead. The two houses of worship belonged to one and the same society, and each church would seat from 500 to 600 people. Each minister was to preach every Sunday to both congregations. There was sufficient demand to take up the pews in both churches.\* It would be interesting to know how they divided the pastoral work, but the writer has seen no reference to it.

Rev. Isaac Keith arrived in Charleston to make his address of acceptance November 23, 1788. He came as a bachelor and boarded with Dr. Bennett. Dr. Keith and Dr. Hollinshead worked together as co-pastors until Dr. Keith's death in 1813, — a joint pastorate of twenty-five years.†

The arrangement, though unusual, was harmonious and successful from every point of view. The undivided church grew in financial strength as well as in numbers. In 1804-1806 a great new church was built on Meeting Street that came to be called Circular Church on account of its shape.

Each minister was paid 200 guineas a year and provided with a house, and was granted an extended vacation while the other minister remained in Charleston. Each had a leave of

\* A deed as late as 1787 refers to the Meeting Street church as the "White Meeting House."

† Dr. Hollinshead lived four years longer.

absence for three or four months once in two or three years. Evidently the plan was conducive to longevity, since both Dr. Hollinshead and Dr. Keith lived fairly long lives, compared with some other pastors.

It was at about this time that the "Clergy Society" was started by action of the church in February and March, 1789. Josiah Smith was the prime mover of the organization; Samuel Beach and Henry D. DeSaussure were on the committee. Its purpose was to raise a fund for the relief of aged, retired, or disabled pastors of this church and their widows and minor children. A history of this organization, so important in the history of the church, is given by itself (page 128). It should be remembered that the support and management of this society (by the same persons) runs on *pari passu* with the church from this time to the present. There was a bad financial situation to be overcome in 1790, when pew rents were far in arrears, and in November the ministers' salaries, payable semi-annually, were then owing for a year. A rapid recovery set in; it was found that debts, notes, etc., due the church amounted to £2249. Vigorous action brought speedy results. Investments were recovered, pew rents and subscriptions began to pour in, and before long it was proposed that two houses be built for the two ministers. While this was favorably considered, it was postponed. Instead the salaries were increased to £275. It was proposed to erect a monument to the memory of Rev. William Tennent, to be placed in either church.\* An item in the records tells of voting \$150 as a reward to three men who by mounting the roof prevented the burning of the Archdale Street church in the great fire of 1796. The corporation also offered the use of either church to the French Congregation when their building was destroyed by fire. Dr. Hollinshead offered the use of his house to a family that had been burned out.

In the treasurer's report we find mention of the amount paid (October 12, 1800) for 84 oz. 3 dwt. of silver to have

\* As noted above, this now stands in the vestibule of the Archdale Street building.

two pairs of cups with covers and double handles made for the Communion service. These were made by Enos Reeves of Charleston, the entire cost being £21 sh. 8. Two of these were sold for \$1,000 a few years ago to a collector of colonial silver, and were deposited by him in the Charleston Museum. At the death of George Washington both churches were draped in "black Mourning cloth" for six months at a cost of over £76. A purchase of a green velvet cushion for the pulpit from Philadelphia for \$25 or £5 sh.16 d.6 gives us the rate of exchange at that period. A summary of the two salaries paid the ministers, and the amount of their house rent, shows a total, in 1800, of £870 annually. To this was added the salaries for the sexton-clerk and the collector of pew rents, making a total of £975 per year; the income is given as £1210 per year. Just after this the ministers' salaries were increased to £500 each for a time, on account of the rise in the cost of living.

In this same year (1800) a bequest was received from the late Mrs. Frances Legaré according to the following quaint phrasing of her will: "I have vowed a vow, therefore I must perform it, that is my house in Tradd St., which my heavenly Father gave me, I now return to the House of my Lord, and it is my desire that it shall be sold or hired out, as the trustees of the Independent or Congregational Church of Charleston may see fit, and the monies arising from such sale or hire, to be appropriated to the following purposes." These purposes were, first a hundred pounds to a Baptist fund for educating young men for the ministry, the residue for the education for the Gospel ministry of similar young men "Who hold the doctrines of Grace as they are taught in the Holy Scriptures as explained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and who possess a character of virtue and piety approved by the said Church and have not the means to acquire such an education at their own expense." The property was sold for 650 guineas, and the hundred pounds paid to the Baptist Society of Charleston.

A slight glimpse of the relations between the two ministers



is found in a letter from William Hollinshead to Thomas Jones, chairman of the church, asking for a vacation for the summer season of 1800. His request is dated June 5. He writes: "Be pleased to assure them (the male members present) I regret the thoughts of parting, and if I go shall feel myself obligated to return to a beloved charge as early as the season will admit. In the meantime I am happy in knowing that they are under divine protection and in the assurances of my worthy colleague that he will cheerfully undertake any additional labors that may accrue to him from my absence. . . ."

There is a request from the church, on the motion of David Ramsay, that at the turn of the century, that is, New Year's Day, 1801, "each of the ministers of the Church be requested to prepare and preach a Century Sermon on the first day of the next year, one to be commemorative of the various dispensations of Providence respecting this Church from its foundation to that time, and the other capitulatory of the state of Religion in the Eighteenth Century throughout our World in general and that they fix between themselves their appropriate subject respectively." Much would we like to find a copy of these two addresses!

The matter of building two houses for the ministers came up repeatedly, and the church voted to build them at a total cost of £4000, £3000 to be provided from funds or securities in the hands of the church, the balance to be borrowed. But in June, 1801, Dr. Keith informed the treasurer that the house formerly owned and occupied by his wife's father had been bequeathed to her, and that they were prepared to take over, repair, and occupy this building, and would find it very satisfactory. In view of the "difficulties and disappointments experienced by the Church in procuring a more eligible habitation" for him, he suggested that if satisfactory to the church he make this his home, and no parsonage need be built for his family. The church responded by accepting his proposal and adding to his salary the annual rental paid for Dr. Hollinshead's rented house. The building of a single house for Dr. Hollinshead did not follow, however.

## THE ORIGIN AND BUILDING OF CIRCULAR CHURCH

AT the end of 1802 the treasurer reported all pews rented in both churches, and applicants for pews waiting to be accommodated. The first suggestions were to enlarge one or the other of the churches; the second, to build a third building on a new site; the third, to pull down the Meeting Street building and erect a larger one on the same site. It was just twenty years since the departure of the British troops in 1782. The church had received extensive repairs in 1784-1785. It was built in 1730 and enlarged in 1759. The plans worked out in detail for another enlargement showed a probable cost of \$14,470. A second plan of enlargement was submitted, and another committee sought new sites and gave estimates of a new building. All these proposals were turned down in favor of a new building on the same site, dimensions to be 60 by 100 feet instead of 40 by 90. It was also voted that pew rents must be continued even though for a time the pew-holders were turned out of their seats. The circular plan was first offered by Dr. David Ramsay, the historian of South Carolina, on December 19, 1803. By February 13, 1804, a definite plan for such a building, with an interior diameter of 88 feet, was presented by Dr. Ramsay and his committee. This plan was finally adopted. The actual designs were made by the celebrated architect, Robert Mills. In a resolution of thanks the church refers to his "ingenious and elegant drawings." He was also voted \$100 as an honorarium for his work.

The round auditorium was to have a copper dome; there was to be a portico over the sidewalk of 6 pillars, a steeple 60 feet high (this was built later to the height of 182 feet),

7 doors, 26 windows, a gallery encircling the larger part of the auditorium, and on the floor 170 pews (166 was the final number). The cost was first estimated at \$21,000. The final cost was over \$60,000. When this plan was adopted, the clerk noted that Josiah Smith withdrew before the unanimous vote of acceptance was carried. The building was to be financed by using or borrowing the various funds of the church and its societies at 6 per cent in the following amounts:

Church funds (bank shares, bonds, and notes due the church)	\$15,315
Funds of the Clergy Society	10,940
Funds of the Missionary Society	1,500
	<hr/>
	\$27,755

The amounts received from these and other sources were as follows:

From the funds of the church	\$ 7,690
From the funds of the Clergy Society	8,595
From the funds of the Missionary Society	1,500
From Josiah Smith's note	1,905
From new loans by individuals	7,050
	<hr/>
	\$26,740

This is one of the few occasions on which the names of women members appear. Miss Mary Edwards made a loan of \$4,500; Mrs. Elizabeth You, one of \$700. Special mortgages on church property were made to them for security. The amount expended on the building by June 10, 1805, was \$21,886. On April 14, 1806, a large business meeting of members and supporters was held in the new building. The committee reported that after the collection of all funds available there would be a debt of \$42,000.

The committee further reported that the only way they could recommend for the payment of this debt was by the sale of pews according to assessments which should be laid upon them, and that the regular support of the church should be obtained by an annual assessment on these pews after they were sold. After some provision for former owners and con-



tributors, and the setting aside of pews for the pastors and their families, it was finally decided that there should be a public sale of the pews, the highest bidder to have the first choice; the second, the second choice; etc. In May it was also decided that the church should be open for public worship on May 25, and for four Sundays following, with all seats free, the Archdale Street church being closed on that first Sunday, and that both ministers should deliver "suitable discourses." This was done, and the addresses were voted printed, together with an historical sketch of the church from its origin, and biographical sketches of the ministers. Thanks were extended to the choir of the two churches who assisted at the opening, and to the South Carolina Society for the free use of their large room for public worship for the preceding months.

On May 26 the committee on assessments reported 166 pews to be assessed for a total of about \$46,000. Of these, 76 ran from \$500 down to \$300, and the rest from \$275 to as low as \$25. The average cost of the pews would be near \$287, and the average for the annual rental in addition was \$25.33. The first 60 pews were sold at "Public Outcry" on Wednesday, June 26, 1806. The first choice brought \$605; the next, \$550; and the last 31 brought \$300 each, making a total of \$20,390. The remaining 106 pews were assessed from \$25 to 550. A sale, held on June 30, left 51 seats unappropriated and 25 pew-holders entitled to pews who had not yet taken them. Provision was also made for two seats for the ministers and for four groups of descendants whose ancestors had each given £500 to the church in the eighteenth century with the stipulation that the descendants of the family should always enjoy a pew in the church rent free.\* A committee was appointed to inquire and report "whether there were any and how many old worshippers in this church whose circumstances have been unhappily reduced, and who are not able to pay

\* These sums were given by Samuel Everleigh in 1739, by Alexander Peronneau in 1773, by Henry Peronneau in 1754, and by Mrs. Ann Mathews (undated) under the will of her daughter, Mrs. Ann Graeme. The pew was held by Mr. E. Neufville.

the assessment on the pews, for whom the Church ought in tenderness to make allotment of pews without requiring any assessment, but subject to the annual rent."

At this time came a letter from Dr. Isaac Keith, co-pastor, to the treasurer saying that he was disposed to take a part in defraying the cost of this "very excellent but very expensive building." He offered as a gift to the building fund the \$300 which he had subscribed as a loan, suggesting that the sum be used to pay the assessment on two or three pews, which might then be leased to two or three heads of families who were not able to pay said assessments but could pay the annual rent. Or, he suggested, if circumstances permit, the pews might be provided gratuitously to widows, especially to those having young and helpless children. It was later arranged that a pew should be given to a particular widow, and that \$200 should be used to pay the full price of the pew which had been assigned to him as pastor.

Passing on to May, 1808, there is an item of record showing that there were then 21 pews unsold, and that a committee appointed to dispose of them found it best to let 15 of them at an annual rental bringing \$403 a year to the church. It is also stated that the total amount received from the sale of the pews was \$32,052.50. Of this nearly \$12,000 was in bonds then unpaid. The total amount paid out on the building up to that time was \$46,405. There was still owing on labor and material about \$6,900, making the total cost at that time over \$53,000. This cost is exclusive of the high steeple built in later years. Church funds to the amount of \$10,500 had been invested in the building, and the amounts due the Clergy Society, the Missionary Society, and individuals aggregated \$21,796, with interest amounting to \$1,380 a year. The treasurer reported the income as \$28,825.

Along with much other business it is noted that the marble monument of Robert Tradd, first male child born in Charleston, and former benefactor of this church, had been taken from the old church and newly lettered, and was to be put up on the wall of the new church north of the pulpit.

## CHURCH WORSHIP

Some hints as to the conduct of worship in the two churches may be gathered from the records. At a business meeting it was once proposed that the "Christian Doxology" be sung at the close of every morning and evening service. This was not acceptable to the meeting, as it was not considered proper to interfere in this matter, but it approved of the "Doxology being sung whenever the minister should be inclined to give notice of the same."

Under the head of "Psalm-singing" the church went to considerable trouble and expense for a number of years to have certain youths trained in singing. Job Palmer and James Badger, the two clerks of the two churches, received \$48 for teaching psalmody to nine lads for three quarters of the year. There was also provision for candles and "lanthorns," tables and benches for weekly meetings for practice, also for fitting up pews in the Archdale Street church for a young ladies' choir. Twenty-four sets of Watts's "Psalms and Hymns," together with twenty-four notebooks, were imported from Philadelphia. A memorandum shows that the cost of these musical preparations amounted to \$347.

There is also a notice that twenty long benches were made, to be put in the middle aisle of the Circular Church to accommodate the colored people on Communion Sunday. It has been traditionally reported that Communion was served in the broad center aisle of the new church at a long table to which communicants came and seated themselves. I found this confirmed by a visit to the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah (founded about 1755). I was told by the officers of this church that the custom continues in their present house of worship. The broad central aisle is over ten feet wide. Down its length from near the pulpit to near the last pew is set up on Communion Sundays a long, narrow table about thirty inches wide, covered with a white cloth, and long benches are placed on each side of it for the communicants. The minister comes down from the high pulpit and conse-



crates the elements at a cross table at the foot of the pulpit, the elders sitting behind him *underneath* the pulpit. They carry the bread and wine down the long tables. Those who do not find seats in the aisle may sit at the end of the pews adjoining.

From this present-day custom of this church in Savannah may be inferred the manner of service in the first Circular Church, with its wide center aisle, the deacons acting in place of elders. This way of communing may have been used by other churches with broad aisles in the first half of the nineteenth century, but, so far as the writer knows, it is quite unique at the present time. It probably reflects the custom of the love-feasts of the early Christian church. That this was the custom of the parish churches of Reformation England preceding the time of Archbishop Laud is noted by T. R. Green in his "History of the English People." By royal decree of Charles I the Communion table was removed from the middle of the aisle back to its pre-Reformation position in the chancel, and secured from profanation by an altar rail (see Green, p. 502).

In 1810, \$135 was paid to Nathaniel Vernon for the silver and the making of two new Communion cups. Another item is that it was voted to lend the church to citizens for public occasions when so requested, if the meetings were preceded by divine worship performed by one of its ministers.

The friendly fellowship of this church with the First Presbyterian Church is shown by the request from the latter, in July, 1811, that the Congregational ministers should occasionally officiate for them in the absence of their pastor and after his dismissal. This request was accepted with cordiality by this church and its pastors.

There is a record of thanks to Dr. Keith for presenting the church with a handsome set of imported chandeliers for the pulpit. In 1812 he was requested and authorized to make an excursion into the country for some weeks for the recovery of his health. It is indicated that he was then unable to perform his pastoral duties, and his return was left to his own judgment and feelings.

In 1812 Job Palmer, after thirty-nine years of service, requests that he be not elected clerk and sexton again, but recommends his son, Edward Palmer, who was duly chosen. In 1813, in response to a letter from the president of the Charleston Bible Society, the church voted to take an offering for that society annually on the last Sunday in August, and to ask its pastors to deliver suitable sermons on the Bible on that day.

On December 20, 1813, mention is made of the death of Dr. Keith, "a faithful and venerable pastor" for twenty-six years, and it was voted that the pulpits of both churches be draped with black for twelve months, and that a marble monument in his memory be erected at the expense of the church, to be put on the left-hand side of the pulpit of the church on Meeting Street. Immediate steps were taken to secure a temporary supply until a co-pastor could be selected. This generous hearted pastor was so loved by his people that not a few of the children of his time and later were christened by his name, Isaac S. Keith.\*

August 27, 1814, it was voted that "this Church, in consequence of the awful scourge of war with which our country is visited for its individual and national iniquities, do request our ministers to appoint a day not far distant which shall be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer . . . and that sermons suitable to the occasion be preached in our two Houses of Worship both morning and afternoon of said day."

\* In a funeral address by Dr. Andrew Flinn (Presbyterian) for Dr. Keith he bestows high praise upon the deceased, both for his character and for his preaching, which he says was strictly orthodox but centering upon Jesus and his atonement. He speaks of Dr. Keith's being foremost to advance the use and distribution of the Bible in Charleston. "He opened his house," says Dr. Flinn, "and gathered around him the ministers who drew up the rules and constitution of the Charleston Bible Society." In 1810 he became its first vice-president; this was before the organization of the American Bible Society.

## UNITARIAN SECESSION

THE carefully planned double structure of the Independent or Congregational Church lasted for thirty years. Dr. William Hollinshead's pastorate just covered the period. Dr. B. W. Palmer was called to the co-pastorate with him in 1814. It was expected that the arrangement would continue indefinitely. The two buildings accommodated about 1,200. There were 340 white communing members and about 400 black, besides a very considerable number of white "supporters," that is, worshippers who held pews and had a voice in all the business of the church except the reception and dismissal of communing members.

Upon the death of Dr. Keith the pulpit committee sent letters seeking a candidate for co-pastor to Princeton and Andover Seminaries, to Yale College and to Hampton-Sidney College in Virginia. Their letters were not easy to answer; as a professor from Andover wrote: "It is difficult to select a man to fill a station so important in the American Church." But Rev. B. W. Palmer was near at hand. He was chosen temporarily at first by a vote of 72 to 37, which indicated a considerable difference in the congregational mind. There was also a lack of harmony between Dr. Hollinshead and Mr. Palmer at first. Indeed, the laymen took formal steps to effect a reconciliation between them, fearing that "sowing seeds of discord and disunion [between the pastors] might lead ultimately to the dismemberment of the Church." The difference was happily settled by the ministers themselves, and Mr. Palmer became co-pastor.

The moral and spiritual strength and integrity of the church was shown by the dignity and resolution with which



it faced, in one year, a number of serious difficulties which would give pause to any church. There was the question of calling a new pastor, the immediate friction between the ministers, the sudden intelligence that a trusted collector was short about \$1,400 in his accounts with the church, heavy arrears in pew rents to the amount of over \$8,000, and the need of considering and adopting a new constitution for the church. In August from forty to seventy men met three or four times a week for two weeks, at 3.30 P.M., to hear, discuss, and pass upon the report of the committee on constitution. Money was raised by subscription to cover the defalcation, several thousand dollars was brought in for the treasury, and the ministerial problems were satisfactorily settled.

In April of 1815, because of ill health, Dr. Hollinshead asked for leave of absence until the end of the year. This was voted by the church with full salary until January, 1816. Then Rev. Anthony Forster was engaged as temporary supply. When Dr. Hollinshead returned, still disabled, Mr. Forster was chosen continuing supply during Dr. Hollinshead's disability, at more than half of his salary. Mr. Forster accepted this charge with some hesitation, writing, "Perhaps there is no church in the country in which more delicacy, prudence and piety are necessary in its pastors," adding, "I trust God will not suffer his vineyard to be laid waste under my hand."

At this time the total receipts of the church for the bien-nium just ended, from pew rents, house rents, and bonds, were \$14,496. Dr. Hollinshead lived until February, 1817. A marble monument was ordered for him, to be placed on the right of the pulpit, balancing Dr. Keith's on the left, and the two churches were draped in mourning for twelve months, as had been done for his associate.

It was at first thought that Mr. Forster would be the unanimous choice of the church, to be co-pastor with Mr. Palmer; but at this time there arose doubt in the minds of some of the more thoughtful members as to whether Mr. Forster was in accord with the long-accepted doctrines of the church. So on March 3 a committee of five was appointed as usual, to con-

sider possible candidates. On April 28 a special meeting of the members and supporters to the number of ninety-five men was called by a group of five men, all of whom were adherents of Mr. Forster. It was then proposed by his friends that, in view of the fact that the church was not in harmony in extending a call to Mr. Forster, and that they were pledged to support him, the rules be revised and that "each of the two churches have a stated pastor," the majority to take Circular Church, the minority to take Archdale and call Mr. Forster, but that there remain one society and one church as formerly. Without action on this it was voted that the recent correspondence between the deacons and Mr. Forster be read. This showed that the minister had refused to declare himself as to whether as a candidate for the sacred office he would accept the stated doctrines of the church, and called in question their right to ask him. Then it was moved by Robert Y. Hayne and seconded that the "connection between this Church and the Rev. Mr. A. Forster be dissolved and the treasurer be instructed to pay him six months' salary in advance." An attempt to adjourn immediately was defeated, and by the same vote the above motion was passed, 58 to 45. Thus the meeting called by his friends to secure the call of Mr. Forster resulted in his ejection from the position of temporary pastor after two years' service.

On June 9 the church held a well-advertised meeting, attended by 116 men, to hear the report of the committee on securing a new pastor. After listening to this Mr. Thomas Lee offered a brief resolution to the effect that the two churches be hereafter established as independent churches, with power to elect their own pastors. A motion for the consideration of this resolution, made by Mr. Robert Y. Hayne, was lost, 64 to 53. A motion to adjourn was lost. It was then suggested that this motion deeply concerned the spiritual interest of the church, that it meant the dismissal of Dr. Palmer from his present charge, and that the communing members must be consulted before there were any further proceedings in this matter. Thereupon a motion was proposed that a committee

of ten persons should be appointed to consider Mr. Lee's proposal, and, if they deemed it expedient, to report on the practicability of the plan. This was accepted by the meeting, and the committee included five on each side of the controversy.

On June 24 this committee of ten reported what was called a "convention" to carry out the division. Each section of this committee worked out separately what it considered should be the terms of the division, and the remarkable thing was that both groups proposed almost exactly the same terms. Before the meeting the terms were made known to both parties in the church, and the convention was adopted without a dissenting vote.

It was provided that the two houses of worship, with their respective congregations, should be two separate, independent churches, with power to make and maintain their own rules and regulations; that, to ascertain precisely who should belong to each church, two subscription papers should be prepared, one for those who wished to remain with the old corporation on Meeting Street, the other for those who wished to withdraw from it and worship on Archdale Street, the papers to be presented to every pew-holder for his decision. When forty male members or supporters should have signed the second paper, a deed was to be made by the corporation to convey to that group, when duly incorporated, the Archdale Street property, which was to be held by the new church corporation subject to the payment of one third of the debts of the Independent or Congregational church. The principal debt being that to the Society for the Relief of Aged and Disabled Ministers, it was provided that all real and personal property of the church (excluding the two houses of worship, with their yards and furniture and funds sufficient to pay salaries and expenses up to July 1st) be assigned to this society, and that the balance of the debt be payable by the two congregations in the above proportions. Equable provision was made for those holding pews in both churches and for the burial of members of families of the two churches in either



yard, and not as strangers. The Meeting Street group were to retain and continue the present corporation and the present pastor, and the bell, the church plate, and the clock were assigned to the Circular Church.

The committee recommended the above measures "as the most likely to tranquillize the Church and unite in brotherly love all its worshippers." It was accepted unanimously, about a hundred qualified voters being present, and each being called by name. The whole report was read from the pulpit by the pastor the next Sunday, and the two papers were duly signed, there being 89 names to remain in Circular Church and 62 to belong to the Archdale Street church. It is to be noted that those who had hitherto been most active in both the business and spiritual concerns of the church elected to remain with the Meeting Street group. Some of those who had come out to support Mr. Forster had not been known to have attended business meetings before; some were declared not entitled to vote.

After all these decisions had been made, a committee appointed to make a résumé (for record) of the course of events leading to the separation reported that the salary of Mr. Forster as supply had been raised from \$1,140 to \$2,240 when it was found that Dr. Hollinshead was not likely to be able to preach again (he being then taken care of by a grant from the Clergy Society); and after his death, at the meeting of the church called February 3, it was thought by all that Mr. Forster would be chosen in his place. But it was then found, in the meeting of the members by themselves, that two of them, in some doubt as to Mr. Forster's theological views, had conferred with him on the subject and had learned that "the tenets of Mr. Forster were at variance with those adopted and which had uniformly obtained in (the) Church," and that if elected he was not likely to subscribe to the constitution and articles of faith. Hence the members decided to postpone the election and appoint a committee of five to consider and recommend a candidate for co-pastor,—the usual method. It was feared that the election of Mr. Forster to

permanent office over a church with whose principles he was not in accord would "awaken a spirit of discord" and "erect his triumph on the divisions of the church." After his exchange of letters with the deacons, in which he refused to commit himself, he wrote an open letter to the church chairman and published it under the title "The Blasphemy of Creeds," commenting with acrimony on those who subscribed to them. This led inevitably to the definite severing of relations with Mr. Forster. The conservative element felt that a clear and concerted effort was being made to "turn these churches from their foundations." A definite party was formed in the church, which met separately as in caucus, to decide what action to take in a regular meeting. "They came not to deliberate but to act." To a large portion of actual worshippers was added a "floating mass composed of persons whose voice had never been heard in the concerns of the church and who neither by attendance or contribution had ever manifested any extraordinary interest." To harmonize these parties seemed hopeless; hence the unanimous decision that the time had come for the division of the church. They agreed that it was better to agree to differ than to wage a sectarian war.

The outcome of this separation was that in a short time the Archdale group was organized, and incorporated as the Second Independent Church. The death of Mr. Forster occurred in about a year, and the congregation called Dr. Samuel Gilman, an able Unitarian minister of Boston, under whose leadership the church became definitely Unitarian.

## DR. PALMER'S PASTORATE

FROM this time on until 1835 Dr. B. M. Palmer was the sole pastor. He was a pious man in the best sense of the word as it was used in those days, well educated and devoted to the church, but a troubled soul, worried by his own conscientiousness, and as the years went by frequently afflicted with illnesses that interfered with his work. He had an able group of men about him; notable among them was Josiah Smith, the patriarchal layman of the eighteenth century who survived until 1826, dying at the age of about ninety-four. He was treasurer of the church for over half a century and was the founder and continuing president of the Clergy Society. In the resolutions passed by the church after his death it was said that he had so lived as "to concentrate the veneration, esteem and confidence of the successive generations that have passed before him." He had cast himself, his family, and his fortune into the struggle for American Independence. He was one of the Charlestonians exiled to Philadelphia by the British. He was prominent as a legislator and as a holder of public office. His eulogy, given by Dr. Palmer, was ordered printed at the expense of the church, and a marble slab was erected to his memory within the church. For over fifty years he served in the office of deacon. "His deportment was grave, dignified and placid; free from ostentation or anything that might impair the force of his bright example as a disciple and follower of Christ."

During Dr. Palmer's pastorate considerable attention was given to improving the music of the church. In 1823, for the first time, an organ was provided to improve the vocal music. After a small organ had been lent by Mr. Richard R. Gibbes



and found to be desirable, it was discovered that a suitable organ could be purchased in New York for \$1,200. A committee was appointed to secure one and to raise money by subscription for that purpose. The committee appears to have been successful. An organist was engaged at \$200 a year, payable quarterly, and an organ-blower, who performed his function for \$20 a year. To pay the organist's salary each pew-holder paying \$40 or more a year was assessed 75 cents semi-annually, and each pew-holder paying under \$40 was assessed 50 cents semi-annually. The organist was declared to be "strictly subject in the performance of his duties to the direction and control of the leader of the choir, who in turn should always be accountable to the Church for his conduct in this respect." After a considerable period two organists refused to accept \$200 a year as insufficient, and eventually the salary was raised to \$250. In 1829 there had apparently been some difficulties about the music, for we read that a committee of five men was appointed to have "absolute superintendence and control of the vocal and instrumental music of the Church, with full power to regulate the same, to introduce such new music as they may select and to provide for the *repairs* and incidental expenses of the choir." One wonders if the conditions had reached such a distressing climax that the choir had to be "repaired," or was it only the furniture that suffered? It is noted that the committee brought in a bill of \$128.90 at the following January semi-annual meeting. It is not recorded that the "bellows-blower" ever asked for higher wages.

It was in this period that the first Sunday school in South Carolina was started by Dr. Palmer. The school met at first in his own home, and finally in a building erected in the yard for its use. This building was begun in January, 1821, on land to the rear and south of the church, leased to the Sabbath school by Mr. (Henry M.) Peronneau for three years without charge. The lease was extended to five years, and finally the land (72 feet wide by 76 deep) was purchased of Mr. Peronneau by the church for \$1,050. In a petition to

the church for aid the supporters of the Sabbath school reported, in 1823, that they had raised by contribution about \$690 and were in debt \$344 for the new building, which was still unfinished but in use. It is called the school room or lecture room. It was voted by the church to assume responsibility for this building and to complete it as soon as the church had title to the building and the lease. It was voted to ask the Clergy Society for a donation of \$500, which apparently was not given. A year later (August, 1824) it is reported that \$180 had been personally contributed, and a committee was appointed to raise by voluntary subscription the amount needed to complete the building.

At first the Sabbath school was carried on independently of the church. It was indeed a union school, including Baptists and Presbyterians. At one time it met in the gallery of the First Presbyterian Church. In the latter part of Dr. Palmer's pastorate, 1834, there came up a "difference" between Dr. Palmer and the teachers of the Sabbath school. At a formal meeting of the church both sides were heard, and it was voted that the church "receive under its care and supervision the Sabbath School connected with the Church and adopt a Constitution for its future government." The officers and teachers of the school were thanked for their self-denying labors and were urged to continue them while a committee of two members of the school and three members of the church prepared a constitution. The new organization was called the "Sabbath School Society of the Independent or Congregational Church." The pastor of the church was always to be the president. There was to be a male superintendent elected annually by a majority of the teachers present; also a male assistant superintendent elected by the male teachers, and a female assistant superintendent elected by the female teachers. This, I believe, is the first recognition of women as having any official position connected with the church or being present at any business meeting. The school was to have an "annual exhibition" in the church on the Sabbath preceding the annual meeting of the Sabbath School Society, a sermon adapted to

the occasion preached by the pastor, and a collection taken for the school. In organizing, Thomas Legaré was named as first vice-president and John Haslett as second. The superintendents and teachers are not named. Arrangements were to be made by the superintendent for periodical examination of the classes in addition to such weekly examination as the pastor might deem necessary. The superintendent, the male assistant, and the male teachers were authorized to adopt rules necessary for further government of the school. Such is a partial picture of this early Sunday school, in some respects more strictly pedagogical than many modern Sunday schools.

One innovation of this period initiated by Dr. Palmer himself was the holding of church meetings, beginning in September, 1828, not for business in the ordinary sense, but for the consideration of matters of a spiritual nature. This meeting was held on the Monday afternoon preceding Communion. The pastor was chosen moderator. Matters were taken up which were "deemed important to the welfare of the church." In practice it often involved questions of discipline of members, especially of colored members. This meeting assumed power to suspend or excommunicate members for cause, to examine candidates for membership, to provide for the instruction of the colored people of the church, to elect deacons, to advise the pastor, etc. An attempt was made to perfect a list of the members in communion as distinguished from supporters. This kind of meeting continued after Dr. Palmer's time. Efforts were successfully made to provide for the partial support of a student preparing for the ministry. The church also called a city missionary worker to take one of the eight districts into which the city had been divided by the "Charleston City Mission," and to raise a salary of \$400 for that purpose.

It is interesting to discover that one step of progress which took place during this pastorate was the change from candle-lighting to the use of lamps with oil. It seems hardly credible, but the great circular auditorium was lighted by candles. Dr. Palmer, in a letter to the corporation, called attention to the



fact that it took the sexton two hours and a half to light and put out the candles each time the church was illuminated. He suggested that a smaller room be hired for midweek evening services, and this was done. In 1819 it was found that twelve lamps could be installed for \$303.43. This was done, and it proved that lighting with the lamps saved the church more than half the charge for candles, gave a much brighter light, and was more ornamental. Incidentally this saved "greasing the pews" from candle droppings and gave more security against fire.

For many years the delayed payment, by the Archdale Street church, of its one-third share of the joint indebtedness, as agreed upon in the "convention" adopted at the time of separation, had caused continued friction between the two churches. A communication from the Second Independent Church in 1819 states that the "worshippers of the Archdale Church, desiring to live on terms of friendship and Christian fellowship with the worshippers in the Circular Church," wish to ascertain what specific sum the latter will accept for settlement of the claims. The matter was at once referred to a committee of five, consisting of Timothy Ford, Robert Y. Hayne, William S. Smith, Thomas Bennett, and Thomas Legaré, "to compromise and settle all matters of controversy between the two churches relating to the subject." But no settlement was made, partly, it appears, because there had been no transfer of property by the mother church toward the settlement of the debt due the Clergy Society. Before the separation in 1817 this debt was fixed at \$38,502. In spite of these advances the debt remained unpaid; in 1832 it was put into the hands of the Court of Equity by Circular Church, but no decision was reached. Finally, in June, 1834, a committee of three from the Archdale Street church (Hugh Patterson, J. A. Yates, and W. H. Ingles) was given full power to effect a settlement. A corresponding committee of the Meeting Street church, consisting of H. A. DeSaussure, J. B. Legaré, H. L. Pinckney, Thomas Bennett, and John Haslett, was appointed. According to the agreement thus reached, Circular Church was to sell to

Archdale Church a lot on Archdale Street south of the church for \$500, and to take the bond of the Archdale Street church for \$5,500, payable in five equal annual installments, with interest from date, in full settlement of the debt. These terms were formally accepted by the Meeting Street corporation. This included giving a quitclaim deed to the Archdale Street church for all claims upon them, and their giving a quitclaim deed to all the joint property and to all presumed claims on the property of the Clergy Society.\*

In August, 1832, after many recurring attacks of illness, Dr. Palmer suffered a breakdown which compelled the cessation of his work, and he was given a year's leave of absence with full salary. The Ministers' Association offered to supply his pulpit indefinitely, taking turns about. After five months Dr. Palmer returned to Charleston still indisposed, but offering to pay \$500 toward a supply and to have his salary reduced from \$2,500 to \$2,000. The church would not accept his offer, but voted to engage a supply at \$100 a month. For several years there had been a steady diminution in the income of the church; pews were being given up, and the pastor felt himself inadequate to meet what he felt was a growing dissatisfaction with his pastorate. As early as 1831, after a rather long and painful letter from the pastor suggesting that the low spiritual condition of the church indicated that it was time for him to resign, the church responded with resolutions containing this quite militant sentence of encouragement: "We hesitate not to say that we are utterly unable to perceive it to be the duty of any pastor to relinquish the spiritual oversight which he has undertaken, however lamentable may be the decay of his physical strength (unless altogether disabled) or the cold and lukewarm state of the church; on the contrary, as the church makes no complaints of the pastor's want of energy in his ministrations to them, and admitting their own want of spiritual life, they believe it ought to operate as a louder call on both Pastor and People to rouse themselves to

\* There is no record that any of these payments were ever made.

greater activity and zeal, and more earnest endeavors to strengthen within them the things which are ready to die." What pastor could resist such a trumpet call from his people? He stayed, and in a few weeks pastor and people were calling a mission worker at \$400 a year for a city mission field. Later the story tells of members brought up for intemperance or immorality and suspended, or in one case forgiven and reinstated. A second resignation was offered and withdrawn in 1834 after explanations and resolutions, and an arrangement tried of giving the pastor four months' absence each year for his health and reducing the salary to \$1,500, supplemented by the Clergy Society. But Dr. Palmer felt this to be unsatisfactory, and in 1835 presented his final resignation, which was accepted with due protestations of gratitude and devotion on both sides, in very lengthy epistles.

Dr. Palmer ended his days in Orangeburg in 1847, having been the recipient of a pension of \$1,000 from the Clergy Society for twelve years. He was the grandson of Samuel Palmer, who was pastor of the Falmouth Congregational Church in Massachusetts for the forty years preceding the American Revolution, and the eldest son of Job Palmer, so long a deacon of Circular Church, who died at the age of ninety-seven years and five months. He was a pupil at Charleston College when it was only a grammar school, and a graduate of Nassau Hall, Princeton College. He studied divinity under Dr. Keith and Dr. Hollinshead. In the eulogy written by Henry A. DeSaussure for the church and society he speaks of those "who for many years sat under the sound of his voice, filling with rich and solemn cadence the vast concave of our church." He says that Dr. Palmer's "sermons were compared with the style of Addison, his prayers were fervent and sublime, his sympathy marked him as a true physician of souls."



## THE PASTORATE OF DR. REUBEN POST

**A** SUCCESSOR to Dr. Palmer was found in Washington, D. C., in the person of Dr. Reuben Post, who had been the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that city for many years, and had twice been elected Chaplain of the United States Senate. He was born at Cornwall, Vermont, in 1792, and prepared for the ministry in the seminary at Princeton. He began his work early in February, 1836, and died in office in 1858. He was a man of remarkable modesty, an indefatigable worker for the spiritual welfare of his people, and was revered for his high character and spiritual leadership. Stephen E. Welsh, of the First Presbyterian Church, at the age of 94 (in 1936), carried a boyish recollection of his venerable figure in the pulpit, with flowing white hair, and recalls that the ministers of some five or six of the leading churches at that time used to exchange pulpits once a year.

The Circular Church had now been built for over thirty years, but as yet had no steeple. Some waggish rhymester had circulated the lines,

Charleston is a pious place and full of pious people;  
They built a church on Meeting Street  
But could not raise the steeple.

To remove this stigma and beautify the church, it was decided by the corporation, under the leadership of John Haslett, to raise a steeple on the present tower at a cost of \$6,000. The result was a graceful steeple, 182 feet high from the ground, built according to the plans of Mr. Ricard. The cost was raised by issuing stock in \$50 shares, payable in fifteen years, with 6 per cent interest guaranteed by the Clergy Society. The

shares were bought by sundry persons, and within the fifteen years the Clergy Society paid the principal as well as the interest.

A regular Sunday collection was taken for the first time in 1839. At first it amounted to about \$100 a month. Eight years afterward the secretary remarked, "This little stream with its continual trickling has swept away a mass of debt," mentioning an old repair bill and a balance on a lot purchased.

An interesting item is the gift of \$2,000 for the purchase of an organ. It was given by Mrs. Jane Keith (Dr. Keith's third wife, Jane Huxham) thirty-six years after her husband's death. In 1851 the church received the sum of \$3,608 from the executor of Mrs. Keith's estate, the proceeds of a legacy left to the church by Dr. Keith but held in the estate during her lifetime. He advised in his will that it be used for charitable purposes, especially suggesting the aiding of young men preparing for the Christian ministry.

It was at this time that an assistant was deemed necessary for Dr. Post, and Rev. I. S. K. Axson was called at a salary of \$2,000. He declined, however, and no assistant was secured. The salary of T. D. Ruddock, organist, was increased from \$300 to \$500. This distinguished organist, elected January 3, 1844, held the position until 1861, when the church was burned and the organ destroyed.

The Simmons Fund of \$2,000 was received by bequest from the estate of Mrs. Elisa Lucille Simmons, December 1, 1849, and is still carried by the church under her name. On January 25, 1847, the corporation acknowledged the gift of the marble baptismal font, still in the church, from Mrs. Jane Keith. We find that gas was first installed, for use in the lecture room only, in 1849.

### THE RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING

Ever since the erection of the Circular Church building in 1806 there had been recurring need for repairs, sometimes amounting to several thousand dollars. The erection of the

steeple in 1838 had cost \$6,000. In the summer of 1852 plans were adopted by the church for the thorough renovation and improvement of the building. This was rendered possible by the appropriation of \$18,000 by the Clergy Society for this purpose. When the work was completed a year later, it was found to have cost over \$6,500 more, which was also paid by the Society. The purpose of the changes was stated to be, "to insure its [the church's] safety and durability and to render it an architectural ornament to the city." Outside the records of the church we have an account by Richard Yeadon, chairman of the society's committee in joint charge of the work with the committee of the church corporation. The architects in charge were Messrs. Jones and Lee. On the outside the portico, formerly out of proportion, was changed to beautiful Corinthian pillars, the steeple was improved by removing projecting galleries, and the old slate roof was changed to metal. In the interior the almost flat roof of the dome, which had seemed to menace the congregation with falling, was apparently lifted up with ribs ascending to a circlet of elegant design at the summit of the dome. The galleries were remodelled and given adequate support to the eye with pillars. The floor was made to slope toward the pulpit, and new and comfortable pews were installed. The platform was improved, and a new pulpit was installed. The aisles were diminished in number but increased in size (except the wide middle aisle). The number of pews was decreased from 166 to 106; they were furnished with cushions and the aisles were carpeted. The windows were altered for better effect. The carved capitals outside, the pulpit, and other carved work were executed by Gunning and Clark in New York. The new gas chandelier, with seventy burners, gave a diffused light throughout the building. It was the fourth of its kind to be installed in the United States. One was in the Circular Church in Philadelphia, another in the dome of the Capitol at Washington. A personal touch has come down to us through the daughters of a lady who attended this church in her girlhood. She recalled how many of the handsomest equipages of the



city waited outside during church time, and how at the evening service the lights were kept low while the congregation assembled, until the venerable Dr. Post ascended the pulpit platform, when they all came on with quite dramatic effect. A writer to the *Charleston Courier*, at the time of the death of Dr. Palmer somewhat earlier, speaks of this church as having the "largest and most influential congregation in the city."

In 1854 the Charleston Presbytery, when inviting the First or Scotch Presbyterian Church of Charleston and the Presbyterian Church of Edisto to become regular members, extended that invitation to the Circular Church and to the Congregational churches in Wappetaw, Dorchester, and Stoney Creek, "that they might be perfectly united with us as a component portion of this Presbytery." They disavow any intention of interfering with the wishes of these respected and beloved churches, but venture the suggestion from the great desirableness that those who agreed on most points of church order "should be outwardly and visibly united." The resolution adds that if the "overtures for union shall not be acceded to, there will be only feelings of regret, but none of unfriendliness." The church responded with high appreciation of the resolutions and "with the utmost fraternity of feeling and agreement on Christian doctrine," but declined to take the action suggested because of "their desire to adhere to their present mode of church Government." That the cordial relations with the Presbyterians continued is shown by the fact that in the following November Circular Church tendered the use of its building to the "Synod of South Carolina" for its religious services when it met in Charleston, and passed a resolution of sincere thanks to Rev. J. L. Girardeau, of the Presbytery committee, for "his labors of love in our midst" during the absence of the pastor and "during the late epidemic." In adopting its revised constitution, July 12, 1858, the church affirmed that its view of the Bible and its construction of its contents were in general the same as that taken in the Confession of Faith and in the Catechisms of the Pres-

byterian Church ratified by the General Assembly in May, 1805.

In the document written by Bazile E. Lanneau, Esq., a prominent layman of Circular Church, who died in 1856, is given a list of sixteen ministers who came out of this church. Fourteen of them were living when he wrote. Their names are as follows: Edward Palmer, John F. Lanneau, S. Beach Jones, D.D., Adam Gilchrist, I. S. Keith Axson, G. H. W. Petrie, William Moultrie Ried, I. S. K. Legaré, T. Hanscome Legaré, Donald Auld, Van Dyke, Bazile E. Lanneau, Lawrence King, Benjamin M. Palmer, William Gready, I. S. K. Palmer.

These men were born or reared in Circular Church, and three of them bore the name of Dr. I. S. Keith; yet nearly all practically became Presbyterian ministers, there being no Congregational ministry for them to enter in the South at that time.

In the spring of 1858 Dr. Post had been very active in united meetings held by the evangelical churches in Charleston. Rev. B. Manly, a Presbyterian pastor, wrote of him: "Among us all there was not one whose addresses were more vigorous and pointed, whose instruction was more practical and comprehensive, whose prayers were more spiritual and devout." In the summer the church urged him to take a long vacation in the North for his health and restoration. After his departure a serious epidemic broke out in the city. In September sickness and death were widespread. In the midst of it, long before he was expected, he returned home, too anxious for his people to remain longer away in the time of their distress. But in a short time he also fell a victim to the pestilence and died on September 24th, 1858, in the twenty-third year of his pastorate. Many noble tributes were rendered to his life and character. Hon. H. L. Pinckney, president of the corporation, gave eloquent expression to the feelings of the church. He spoke especially of his humility and his effective preaching, under which "many, and many were added to this Church, who will be the seals of his ministry," and of his single-minded desire that all who heard him should

become "Christians in sincerity and truth." The Central Presbyterian Church, with which the relations of Dr. Post had been particularly intimate, passed resolutions "not formal but heartfelt," mourning for one whose departure "is a loss not only to your Church but to the Church of Christ at large." The Presbyterian Synod of South Carolina took occasion to send extended resolutions referring to him as "the angel of the Church now known as Circular and which for nearly two centuries has been a bright and morning star of pure and undefiled religion amid the twilight darkness," a church where "many of the great and good men of their generation, the patriots, legislators and leaders of the people have worshipped God in the beauty of holiness." Dr. Post is characterized as having "a truly Catholic, evangelical spirit, a hearty union with all the great benevolent enterprises of our age and a peace-loving tender heart which led him always to avoid controversy and debate"; eminently "a son of Consolation." Indeed, it would seem that the description of Barnabas in Acts 11: 24, "for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith; and much people was added unto the Lord," could well be applied to him. The church was draped in black for six months after his death, and a marble tablet to his memory was placed on the inside wall. His tomb-stone is now in the church-yard. During the autumn following his death Dr. J. L. Kirkpatrick, pastor of the Glebe Street Presbyterian Church, supplied the pulpit, his congregation uniting with Circular, as their building was under repair. It is noted that the corporation extended formal thanks to Mr. M. S. Reeves, organist, and the choir of St. Paul's Church for their aid at the funeral of Dr. Post.

The erection of a new Sunday school hall and lecture room with two floors was undertaken in 1858, and was reported as finished May 2, 1859, at a cost of \$4,600, all of which had been provided. It may be of interest to note that in 1858 stoves were installed in the main building for the first time. So it would appear that up to that time, through all the chilly winter Sundays, the people sat and shivered. In July of 1859



the care of the grounds was undertaken by the standing committee. The treasurer was authorized to have the "graveyard cleaned up, levelled and planted with shrubbery and flowers, as soon as the state of funds allow, and the colored sexton was to be required to keep the same in order under the direction of the Committee or the Treasurer." It is not apparent, however, how soon the state of funds allowed, but at least a new sexton was secured.

The first attempt at securing a successor to Dr. Post was rather unfortunate. A young man from New York who had just completed his theological studies was called, first as temporary supply, then as permanent pastor. His pastorate, however, lasted barely three months. The correspondence regarding Mr. Fay was not recorded, but it transpired that his application for ordination had been refused by a New York presbytery. His brief letter of resignation was accepted without comment.

#### THINGS LEGAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL

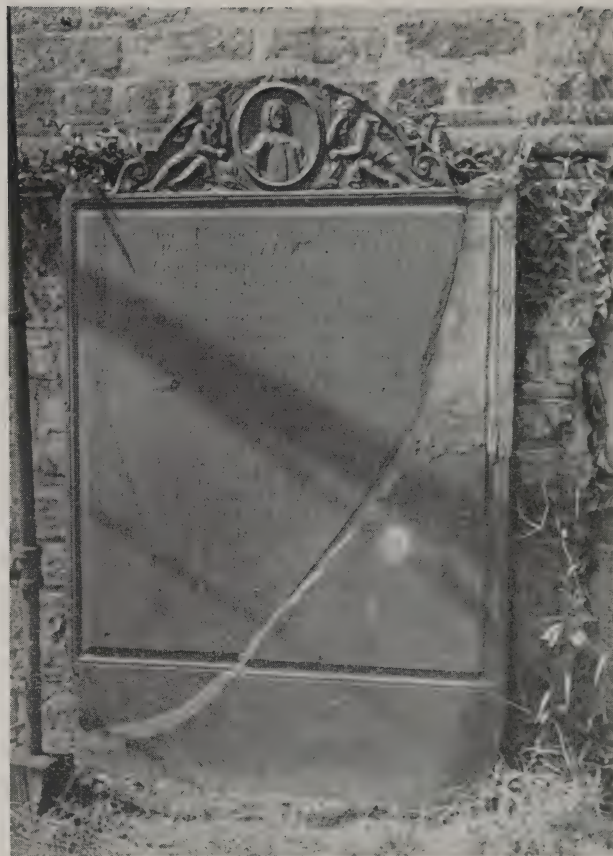
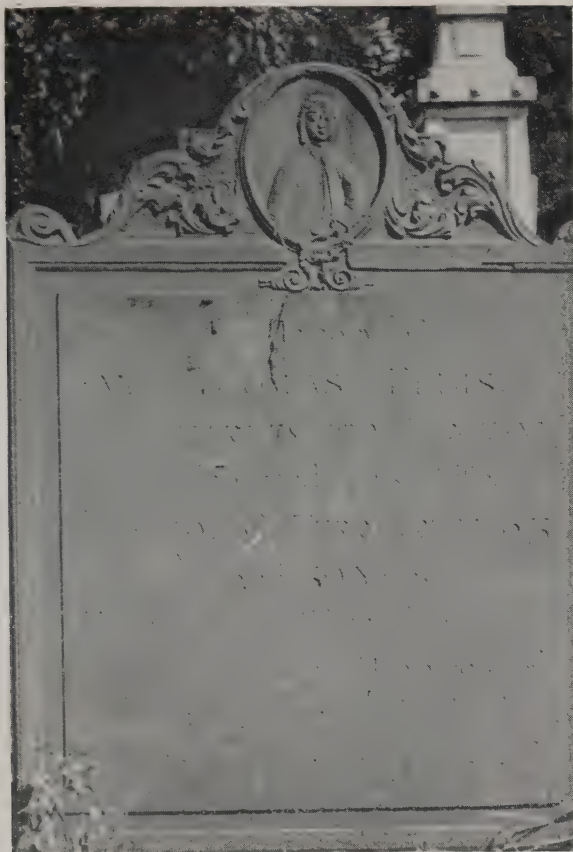
Before taking further steps to secure a pastor it was thought necessary to state with some care the ecclesiastical position of this church and what it expected of its ministers. A suit against the Clergy Society and the church had lately been decided by decree of court. The committee appointed to study this matter concluded that this legal decision "imposed upon *this Church* the legal and moral necessity of doing every thing in its power to establish *Congregationalism* in South Carolina, as a denomination." They had been reproached for having ignored other Congregational churches, and for having applied the funds of the Clergy Society to the exclusive use of this church. It was shown to the satisfaction of the court, however, that this was the only congregation in the state that answered to the description of the charter at the time of its issuance, and, further, that the funds in question had been almost exclusively contributed by the members of this church, and entirely managed and increased by

them. Furthermore, the court decided that the society was warranted and justified by its charters of 1789 and 1834 in making appropriations for the upbuilding of the church. There being, however, two or three churches in South Carolina which were entitled to the name Congregational, this (Circular) church should take such steps as it could to secure their growth and permanence. Hence, concluded the committee, the church should require its ministers to be ecclesiastically connected with it and endeavor to re-establish a Congregational association of churches and ministers. For there was such an association organized in 1800 by Dr. Hollinshead and Dr. Keith, co-pastors of this church, and others, but dissolved in 1823 at the repeated request of the Harmony Presbytery in order to form a new presbytery to be called the Charleston Union. It was argued that, the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations being of the same faith, with only non-essential differences of church government, their ministers should be united in one body. Dr. Benjamin M. Palmer became a member of the Union Presbytery, but the church never took any affirmative action in the matter. When Dr. Post, who had been a Presbyterian minister in Washington, came to this pastorate, he was also allowed to join the local presbytery, there being no Congregational association. This committee found, however, that the period of greatest prosperity of this church was in 1822, just before the Congregational Association was given up. The writer of the report therefore concluded that, instead of training their own order of ministers, the Congregationalists had spent their means sustaining and extending another denomination; the church "had been a hive from which swarms had gone out for the benefit of others." The church had begun its history with Congregational ministers, but had had Presbyterian ministers from time to time because Congregational ministers were not available; it always insisted, however, that its independent order must be preserved. After the Revolutionary War the two pastors, Drs. Keith and Hollinshead, dissolved their former presbyterial connection. The church prospered greatly under their long leadership.

They not only built a second building on Archdale Street, but tore down the old building on Meeting Street to erect the new and spacious Circular Church. After the loss of the Unitarian contingent in 1817 the old church again increased and prospered, so that it was necessary to build pews in the south gallery in the early pastorate of Dr. Palmer, who had been ordained by the local Congregational Association. As a result of this report it was voted by the church that any future minister should be ecclesiastically identified with it, and that with his help the Congregational Association should be revived and reorganized. Since the courts had decided that the income of the Clergy Society was only for disabled ministers of the Congregational order in South Carolina, it was necessary for the church to see to it that there were Congregational ministers entitled to receive its benefits.\*

\* For a more detailed account of the case against the society see "The Story of the Clergy Society," page 128.

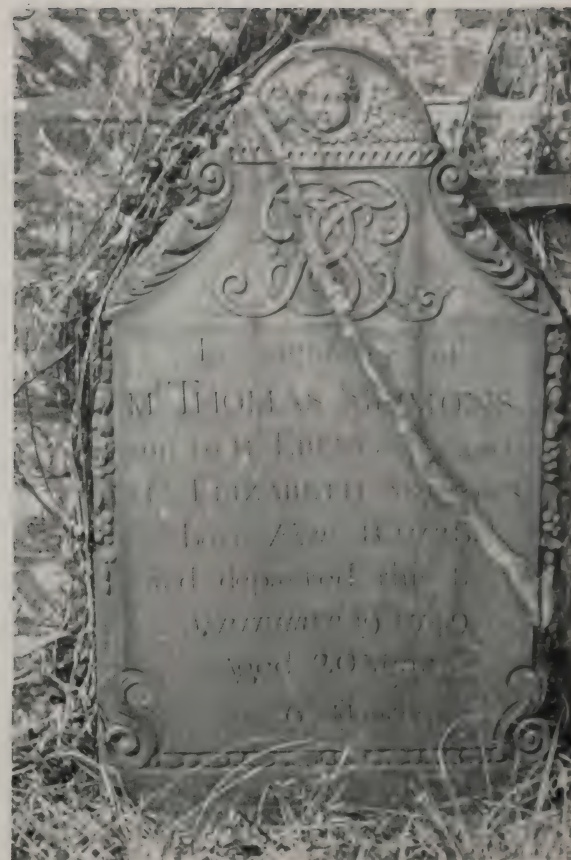




#### INSCRIPTIONS

*Left:* Gravestone of Thomas Ellis, died 1763.

*Right:* Gravestone of Nathan Bassett with portrait bust and weeping boys placed against rear wall of church. Pastor 1724-1738.



#### INSCRIPTIONS

*Left:* Gravestone of William Hutson with portrait bust. Pastor 1757-61.

*Right:* Gravestone of Thomas Simmons with cherubic figure, 1728-49.

## UNDER THE SHADOW OF WAR AND INTO THE FURNACE OF FIRE

**T**HE next minister to be called was Rev. Thomas O. Rice, a Congregational minister of Brighton, Massachusetts, recommended by Dr. Nehemiah Adams of Boston. After being duly nominated by the communing members, he was unanimously chosen pastor by the corporation on November 28, 1859, at a salary of \$2,500 a year. At his installation Dr. Nehemiah Adams of Boston gave the sermon, Dr. George W. Blayden, also of Boston, gave the address to the people, and Dr. John Todd of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, gave the charge to the pastor.

At the semi-annual meeting in July, 1860, the treasurer's report showed an indebtedness of \$2,354. A motion to borrow \$3,000 from the Clergy Society to meet this was rejected, and it was voted to raise money by subscription. By January this resulted in the receipt of \$1,110 from forty-five persons. At the annual meeting this significant statement was made: "In consequence of the present political and commercial state of affairs we have not pressed subscriptions in the congregation, knowing that the pecuniary means of most are curtailed thereby, and that much has been given in the city to aid in preparation to defend the State." Thanks were extended to the givers, and the hope was expressed that "as soon as it shall please Divine Providence to bless the State again with the assurance of quiet and prosperity," those who had not yet given might unite in raising the balance required.

The loss of the great circular building by the conflagration which raged over the city on December 11, 1861, was one of the severest calamities this church has ever suffered. The fire



began about half a mile away to the northeast, and under a high wind cut a wide swath nearly to the Ashley River. Other important buildings destroyed included the South Carolina Hall, next door, the theater across the street, and the Roman Catholic Church on the site of the present cathedral on Broad Street. The fire was not due to any military action of the war. It occurred only eight years after extensive improvements had been made in the church, at a cost of \$26,000, and but two years since the new lecture hall and Sunday-school room had been built, at an expenditure of \$4,600. The church building, with its pillared entrance, lofty spire, and elaborate lighting system, its pipe organ and its marble memorials on the inner walls, was considered one of the finest buildings in the South. Its original plans were drawn by Robert Mills, the nationally known architect of Charleston. It was erected in 1804-1806, being the third church building on this site.

The congregation met the next Sunday in Hibernian Hall, which had been offered them in this emergency. Other offers of the use of their buildings came from the Glebe Street Presbyterian Church, the Central Presbyterian Church, the First Presbyterian Church, and the Unitarian Church. The First Presbyterian Church added an invitation to the Congregational pastor that he alternate with their pastor in conducting Sunday services in their sanctuary. The Second Presbyterian Church, in offering their sympathy and the use of their building, recalled that many of them had been fellow members or descendants of those who founded this church. The resolutions adopted that first Sunday by the congregation expressed their unabated affection and appreciation of the old organization handed down to them from their fathers, who had "planted this Church in the Wilderness," and pledged themselves to restore their house of worship, "prudently but zealously," and appointed a committee of seven to consider and report what measures should be adopted. The seven were: K. Burden, H. A. DeSaussure, R. Yeadon, C. L. Trenholm, David Ramsay, J. T. H. White, and D. F. Armstrong. It was decided in due time to ask for the use of the lecture room

of the Central Presbyterian Church for regular services, and this was granted. The iron, copper, and bell metal of the ruined building were salvaged, but the brick walls and tower were destined to remain standing for many years.

### PARISH BENEVOLENCES

One almost immediate consequence of the fire was the suspension of the Laurel Street city mission which had been conducted for nearly ten years by Circular Church for the unchurched poor of the city. It was managed by the pastor and deacons with the aid of a fund of over \$8,000 left to them by Miss Sarah B. Stevens for this purpose. A pastor was engaged at a salary of \$800-\$1,000 a year, a small chapel was built with other funds, and donations were received from individuals, from ladies' societies in the church, and occasionally from other churches in the city, such as the First Presbyterian, the Central Presbyterian, and the French Protestant. After the war (1869) it was voted, on account of the reduced circumstances of the church and its surviving members, to use the interest of this fund for the preaching of the Gospel in Circular Church.

Interesting light on the benevolences of the church is given in a special report by Deacon A. P. Gready, presented to the church in 1856. His report had been asked for because it was believed "that some of the poor members of the Church may suffer from want on account of the small amount collected at communion seasons." The average annual amount distributed for fourteen years, 1841-1855, had been \$380, or about \$63 every two months. The amount per person varied as the number of persons and the amount to be distributed varied. From ten to twenty-one persons had been on the list, both white and colored. The deacon mentioned that the last distribution that year had provided \$7.50 a person, with the exception of one, who received \$12, a helpless old person requiring a nurse. Fine warm clothing, food, nursing, etc., were furnished. The money expended came not only from the

Communion collections but from individual donations. The board of five deacons states that for the period covered by this report the entire labor of distributing the alms of the church had been done by Deacon Gready alone, who also kept the records of what was done. It is interesting to see what a single church was doing regularly before the time of organized charity. Mr. A. P. Gready died in 1860, after having served as deacon of the church for thirty years. He also served twenty years as treasurer, and for many years, as supervising sexton, he saw that the buildings and church-yard were kept in order. He was a leader of the prayer-meeting and instructor of the colored people in their Sunday school, and was known for his devotion to religious literature and meditation. "To this Church," says the record, "Mr. Gready has left a legacy more enduring than marble, more precious than gold, a consistent Christian example, and a good name."

#### COLORED PEOPLE IN CIRCULAR CHURCH

With the church approaching a tragic turning point in its history, let us gather up some of the threads of the past. As was the custom with the older churches of Charleston from colonial days until after the Civil War, the Negroes worshipped in the churches of their masters. In a letter from this church to London, in 1738, seeking to secure a pastor from England, in addition to salary offered and the use of a house and grounds, mention is made of "a negro boy appropriated to the ministry of our congregation." In a call given to Josiah Smith in 1742 the Negro's name is given—"Boston,"—and the use of him is stated to be part of the salary. In 1850 he is named again, when it is expressly said that the minister may take him on a long leave of absence in the North. He was permitted to take "Boston" out of the province "to wait on him at his proper charge and expense but on the Society's risque," as the man belonged to the society.

There is an earlier story than this, told on the authority of Deacon Josiah Smith (son of the Reverend Josiah Smith),



namely, that he had received information from an old black man who waited on Rev. William Livingston, then pastor, that in the year 1713, when a great hurricane swept over the city, Mr. Livingston with this servant was living in a house on White Point (now High Battery).

In the first book of records extant, beginning in 1732 among the marriages, births, and deaths recorded at the back from 1732 to May 9, 1738, are the following:

"Abraham, a negro man of Mr. Samuel Jones's was baptized Aug. the 11th 1734 by me, (signed) Nathan Bassett "

"Peter, an adult negro man was baptized 30th of December, 1737 by me, Nathan Bassett "

"Mary and Susannah her daughter, negroes of Landgrave Thomas were baptized the 7th of April, 1738 by me, Nathan Bassett."

Curiously enough, the next and last entry on the list is:

"Thomas Smith, Landgrave, departed this life the 9th of May, 1738, and was buried at his plantation at Goose Creek, witness present Nathan Bassett."

There are no further entries, white or colored, until 1784, in another book where occasional entries like the above are interspersed with white until 1790, when they are separated. Only once does the word "slave" appear. Usually it is "servant of" or "belonging to." There are two cases where Negro children are baptized and then said to be adopted by the master or mistress. Occasionally one is baptized as a "free-man, formerly a servant." In 1814, on the last page of these entries, for the first time the Negroes were given surnames, such as Scipio Hall, Jacob Collins, Catharine Parker. Thirty-one adults baptized in a short period in 1815 would indicate a revival at that time.

In a register beginning in 1836 with the pastorate of Rev. Reuben Post, admissions to the church of both white and colored people are recorded for twenty-two years, the register for colored persons being at the back of the book. The totals show 243 whites and 284 Negroes during that time. The list is a remarkable tribute to the devotion of the pastor. The

colored people were divided into classes, about seventy in each, for spiritual instruction and watch-care, with a colored leader for each class. Six classes are listed by name by Dr. Post. It was specifically set down that these leaders were not to preach sermons or expound Scripture, but they were given liberty in prayer, exhortation, and song. Not infrequently, at a business meeting of the "male, white, communing members," the meeting became a court to pass on the delinquencies of colored members. The cases were usually adultery or immorality. The culprit would be summoned to appear and answer the charges. The penalty, if found guilty, was usually suspension from membership and debarment from Communion. Some persons, when repentant, were reinstated.

In this church the colored people evidently stood or were seated in the back pews, until the corporation ruled that they should no longer do so, and seats were provided for them in the gallery. They were cared for by the charities of the church equally with the whites. After emancipation one hundred and seventeen colored members were dismissed in 1867, to form the Plymouth Congregational Church. There is a letter from Plymouth Church in 1870 asking that a member named Jane Jenkins, at her request, be reinstated in Circular Church, and it was done. A similar request was granted in 1871. To this day Plymouth remains the only colored Congregational church in South Carolina. It has prospered and owns its own church building and parsonage on Pitt Street.

### GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

We pause here before the post-war period to record the long line of gifts of generations of Christians who loved their church and for a hundred and fifty years have been giving generously to perpetuate it.

**C**IRCULAR CHURCH has been the recipient of many donations and legacies, especially during the eighteenth century. The list of donors compiled in 1853 is still of interest, though in the course of two centuries and a half, interrupted by two wars which shook the financial foundations of the city, and the building of a great church, the funds have been greatly depleted. At the very outset was the gift of the land on which the church still stands; it was given by Henry Simonds at an undetermined date, but early enough so that the first meeting-house was standing on it in 1694. The gift was confirmed by a deed given by his widow Frances Simonds in 1704. In 1707 she bequeathed another plot of land adjoining, and a silver cup marked "H.S." Andrew Alden gave additional land for the burying ground in 1730. Andrew Allen also gave a silver cup marked "P.M."

In 1730 Lydia Durham bequeathed a share of her rents on certain properties.

In 1730 Robert Tradd bequeathed £1000, (current) income to be for the minister officiating at this church.

In 1731 William Warden gave more land for the burying ground.

In 1732 Thomas Ellery gave more land for the same purpose.

In 1737 Samuel Eveleigh bequeathed £500 for a pew to be used by his heirs.

In 1740 Charles Peronneau bequeathed £1500.

In 1745 James Mathews bequeathed £200.

In 1754 Henry Peronneau bequeathed £500.

In 1756 Henry D'Harriette bequeathed £500.



- In 1760 John Mathews bequeathed £400.  
 In 1761 Theodora Edings bequeathed £200.  
 In 1761 Ann Mathews bequeathed £500.  
 In 1768 George Mathews bequeathed £350.  
 In 1769 William Dandridge bequeathed £350.  
 In 1770 Mary Heskit bequeathed £200.  
 In 1774 Alexander Peronneau bequeathed £500.  
 In 1776 Othniel Beale bequeathed £150.  
 In 1776 and 1786 eighty-three ladies subscribed for building the pulpit in the Archdale Street church £650.  
 In 1779 Sarah Stoutenburg bequeathed £1005 (current money then worth only £14 to £1 sterling)  
 In 1779 (approx.) Josiah Smith presented to the church land on Archdale Street,—land which had cost him, before depreciation, £4000. On it were two tenements which later were moved to King Street and then brought an annual rent of \$300.  
 In 1777 Mary Lamboll Thomas gave £2660 toward the purchase of more land. This sum depreciated to £1380 4sh. 10d.  
 In 1780 Mrs. Mary Ellis bequeathed £3000 in indents which depreciated to £129 5sh. sterling.  
 In 1784 George Smith bequeathed a pew in Saint Michael's Church which sold in 1808 for \$300.  
 In 1792 Dr. Richard Savage bequeathed £50 sterling.  
 In 1799 Widow Ruth Powell bequeathed £100 sterling.  
 In 1800? John Scott, Jr., bequeathed £150 sterling.  
 In 1801 Mrs. Frances Legaré bequeathed a house on Tradd Street which being sold accrued 650 guineas to the church.  
 In 1806 Dr. I. S. Keith gave \$300 to provide two or three pews rent free in the new church to families of poorer members of the congregation.  
 In 1807 147 ladies gave \$2063 toward the building of the pulpit of Circular Church.  
 In 1808 Rev. Dr. Keith bequeathed the reversion of \$5000, the income to be expended "at the discretion (of the Church) for pious purposes." This money was not received until 1851 upon the death of his widow. It then amounted to \$3608.  
 In 1849 Miss Elizabeth Huxham bequeathed \$1000 for the relief of widows and single women of the church.  
 In 1849 Mrs. Eliza L. Simons bequeathed \$2000, income to be for the repairs of the church.  
 In 1849 Mrs. Jane Keith gave \$2000 towards the purchase of an organ and a legacy of \$2000 for the same purpose.  
 In 1851 Miss Sarah B. Stevens bequeathed securities amounting to

near \$9000 for the preaching of the Gospel to the poor. This was the proceeds from a fund left in trust to Miss Stevens by Mrs. Jane Keith to be left to the church on the death of Miss Stevens. This has been called the Pastor and Deacons' Fund and still amounts to about \$8000.

This concludes the list given in the document of 1853. In 1870 Richard Yeadon, who probably compiled the list given above, left \$1,000 to the church which was added to the building fund then accumulating. Besides the Pastor and Deacons' Fund just mentioned, the Keith Fund of over \$3,000 and the Simons Fund of \$1,500 are still (1942) in the custody of the church. To these was added (July 4, 1928) the Bennett Fund of \$5,000, given by Mr. A. B. Murray in memory of Mrs. Mary L. Bennett, a former member of the church, who died July 4, 1882. The income was to be used for the care of the churchyard.

The figures show a total of gifts and bequests of money (exclusive of land or money for the purchase of land) amounting to £6850 up to 1779. The pound was so depreciated at that date that Sarah Stoutenburg's bequest of £1005 was probably not worth a tenth of that amount. It should be noted also that Josiah Smith's gift of the church land on Archdale Street brought \$300 a year in rentals of apartments for many years thereafter. During the Revolutionary War period the funds suffered not only from depreciation but from losses from loans made by the church to the state. I find the statement, made in terms of dollars under post-war currency, that the church loaned \$18,857 to the state in 1778-1779. The amount recovered in 1783 was only \$3,515. The church building on Meeting Street was ravaged by the British, then repaired and reopened December 11, 1783, at a cost of \$6,000. The second building on Archdale Street was finished at a cost of another \$6,000, and dedicated October 25, 1787. The managers of the church funds were pretty good financiers in those days. The bequests after the war in pounds sterling may be estimated in dollars at \$5,500; other gifts down to 1851 bring the total to about \$21,700.\* In this period the great building

\* Exclusive of amounts given for a new pulpit and for the organ.

enterprise of 1804-1806 absorbed all the funds that could be used for that purpose. After the Civil War was over, the statement of the treasurer (July 1, 1868) showed that he had gathered together, from city stock and railroad bonds held and from accrued interest, funds to the amount of \$17,277. From this was taken over \$7,500 for rebuilding and furnishing the lecture room, which continued to be used for church purposes until 1891.



## THE AFTERMATH OF WAR

FROM March and April, 1862, in the various records there is an hiatus or interim of four years, that is, until a year after the war, when they take up again, in March, 1866, in the same books without any reference to the omission. The record of one event, however, is recovered: under the date of January 18, 1868, a committee reports the resignation of the pastor, Rev. T. O. Rice. This committee (Messrs. H. W. Mitchell, J. F. Roberts, and J. B. Lance) reported that, at a meeting held about November, 1864, in the Orphan House Chapel, where the church then met for worship, having been driven from the lecture room of the Presbyterian church on Hazel Street by the shells of the enemy, Rev. T. O. Rice presented his resignation as pastor. It was accepted, and the president of the meeting, Hon. Henry A. DeSaussure, undertook to secure passes for Mr. Rice through the two lines so that he could go North. This permission was secured from the commanding Confederate general, but could not be obtained from the commander of the United States forces. So the minister took passage on a blockade runner for Nassau in the Bahamas, whence he safely reached his home in the North. A few days after his departure the city was evacuated by the Confederate forces. It is said that the eight or ten persons present were nearly if not quite all the male members then present in the city. There is no further record of what happened until March 5, 1866, when thirteen members met at the home of J. B. Betts to discuss the general interest of the church, especially the repair of the fence about the churchyard, and on June 11 it was voted to rebuild the lecture room, using the securities still held by the church to cover the cost.

## A STORMY POST-WAR PASTORATE

The pastorate of Rev. William Hooper Adams commenced very auspiciously in 1867. A salary of \$1,800 was offered at the outset, with the promise to increase it to \$2,500 as soon as possible. Mr. Adams came from Eufaula, Alabama, but was originally from the North. The following summer he was cordially granted a six-weeks vacation with \$100 extra for travelling expenses. Other considerable gratuities were added, and by January, 1871, the regular salary was fixed at \$2,200. A silver individual Communion service was presented to the pastor. In 1870 a committee was appointed to raise funds for the erection of a new church building. A fund of \$1,200 was reported by them seven months later. In 1870 a church manual was prepared by the pastor, adopted by the church, and printed for distribution. The assets of the church in productive funds were given, in July, 1871, as \$14,452. In 1870 the church suffered the loss of its president, Mr. Richard Yeadon, a lifelong supporter and benefactor, greatly loved by his associates. He left to the church a bequest of \$1,000, which was added to the building fund.

By the summer of 1871 this fund had increased to over \$2,000, after nearly \$500 had been paid for taking down and cleaning the bricks of the old building. The committee was divided as to the advisability of going ahead to build. The majority report not to proceed at this time was adopted. Then, after an urgent appeal from the Ladies' Sewing Society, pledging assistance and urging that they do proceed to make a beginning on a new edifice, the vote was reconsidered, the committee discharged, and a new committee appointed to secure plans. Yet there was evident a decided reluctance either to use the invested funds of the church or to go heavily into debt. A year later this committee reported plans made and submitted by Architect Edw. Parker of Boston, but no plans were adopted. The next we hear is that, owing to the failure of the state stock to pay its 6 per cent interest, the church must borrow from the building fund and reduce the minister's

salary by \$400. In accepting the reduction Mr. Adams asked for \$250 to meet his outstanding obligations, and offered the suggestion that the congregation, having been "singularly exempted from the necessity of contributing to the maintenance of church services hitherto," might now be stimulated to do something about it. (The entire income from pew rents at this time was only \$120.) The corporation proceeded to borrow the entire building fund of \$2,700. The standing committee, however, recommended that at the next annual meeting (January, 1875) "it may be advisable to take into consideration the feasibility of an increase in the amount of the pew rents." These were then \$5 and \$10 a year. It should be remembered that these years were a period of great financial depression throughout the country.

In judging the hesitation of the church to build at this time it should also be remembered that the ruin of the old Circular Church stood there, "a grand though sad memorial of the past," cumbering the ground with its bulk, an obstacle to every scheme the committee devised. The architect, Mr. Parker of Boston, came at the request of the committee, and after careful examination recommended that the ruin be razed to the ground and suggested that the bricks might be utilized in a new building. The architect then worked out complete plans for a circular building with detailed estimates, taking the place of a Gothic plan submitted by him four years earlier. The building cost would be \$28,064 without pulpit, pews, or outside stone steps. Besides this the value of the old bricks was carefully estimated at \$2,835. Another deduction could be made by building the tower up to only forty feet. The diameter of the circle was to be 92 feet.

A meeting of the church corporation, held evidently in an atmosphere of great tension, resulted as follows: The plans were adopted and the fee of the architect (\$982) was ordered paid; then a motion that the building committee secure estimates for rebuilding was rejected; then a motion was passed that the building committee be discharged, as there was "evidently no present intention of rebuilding." The building fund



was put into the hands of the church treasurer, to be held in reserve, and the plans were turned over to the president of the church for safe-keeping. And so the picturesque but gloomy ruins slumbered on until shaken down by an earthquake thirteen years later.

It was about this time that Mr. Adams presented the church with one hundred copies of a new hymnal named "Church Pastorals," prepared by his father, Dr. Nehemiah Adams of Boston. The book contained nearly a thousand hymns with music. The gift had been accepted with thanks by the "male white communing members," but in the corporation a motion was made that it be not accepted. This motion was lost but it was an indication of the latent antagonism about to break out against the pastor. Two years later these books were laid aside and no longer used.

The conflict that broke out between the pastor and the corporation of the church in 1876 proved to be the most disastrous event that had occurred in its history. It had suffered from fire, from war, from pestilence, and from a serious division of its membership by the Unitarian secession; but nothing had so marred its spirit, depleted its membership, and hindered its growth as this controversy. The trouble broke out in April over the administration of the Sunday school. The pastor had suggested to the officers and teachers the introduction of the new International Uniform Lessons. This was not approved. A motion to look after the management of the Sunday school and revise its rules was voted down after long discussion, on the ground that the church had no authority in the matter. Especially it was contended with some heat that the pastor had no authority to supervise the Sunday school. This led to an unprecedented act on the part of the pastor, who laid the matter before a Sunday morning congregation to get their opinion on the question. Mr. Adams said that he did not expect this vote to supersede the action of the male communing members, but it involved an appeal to the women and minor \* members present and aroused the wrath

\* Not over eighteen years of age.

of his enemies. Mr. Adams had already, in April, been granted a leave of absence of three months on account of the serious illness of his father in Boston, and had departed. At the semi-annual meeting in July, immediately after rejecting plans for a new building, three members of the standing committee reported that the pastor had defied the constitution and by-laws of the church by calling a mixed meeting of the church, in which female members were included, to consider a matter already settled by the male communing members. For this the meeting voted to demand the resignation of Mr. Adams from his pastoral charge. The acting secretary refused to send the resolutions to Mr. Adams, so it was done by Mr. Mitchell, the president. Mr. Adams promptly wrote back refusing to resign, and the fight was on. His letter to H. W. Mitchell was brief and may be quoted entire.

“Dear Sir: I should be recreant to my vows as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the flock over which for more than nine years, the Holy Ghost has made me overseer, were I to comply with the request of the Corporation, and thus forsake the majority of my people appealing to me still to defend the constitution and existence of their church.

Respectfully yours,

WM HOOPER ADAMS

The corporation forthwith emphatically denied that a majority were supporting the pastor, declared that he had created a schism, and voted that the usual services of the church be suspended “until harmony be restored.” In September a request came from Mr. Adams that he be given a further leave of absence for from three to six months without salary, in order to complete his father’s publications and attend him in his last illness. This request was summarily turned down, but the pastor remained away until December.

During this time new locks and bars were secured by the standing committee to make fast both the doors of the building and the gates of the yard. It was voted that the pastor’s salary cease with August 31. Mr. Adams returned and demanded that the church doors be opened on December 10.

This being refused by the president, Mr. Mitchell, a letter came to the corporation from the legal advisors of the congregation advising the corporation that they had been engaged to institute proceedings to secure the rights of "many pew-holders, communicants and worshippers" to use their church edifice for worship, and adding that it was hoped that legal proceedings would not be necessary. Already, on December 2, a petition had been drawn up and signed by forty-three members of the church, men and women, requesting that the doors of the church be opened on December 10. This was about half of the white membership. This petition and the letter from the law firm were presented to the corporation on December 18. It voted that the prayer of the petitioners be granted and that the church be opened for "regular services and Sabbath School," and then proceeded to reduce the minister's salary from \$1,800 to \$100 a year. It also voted to rent no more pews until "the desired harmony be restored"; that was to prevent an increase of incorporators favorable to Mr. Adams. It should be remarked that the official body divided about 7 or 8 to 6 or 7 on most questions, a bare majority of one being against the pastor. A meeting of the communicant male members, almost identical with the corporate members, held near January 1, tried to suspend the Communion service on January 7, because "there is much contention between the members . . . and those that gather around the Lord's Table should love one another." The motion was lost by the deciding vote of the moderator (the pastor presided at this kind of meeting). There were fourteen present. From then on, as it appears later, the opponents of Mr. Adams absented themselves from Communion and most other services.

Those who were determined to oust the pastor from his charge tried from the beginning to make their acts appear strictly constitutional, but their illegal action was evident at once because they ignored Article IX of the church constitution, which fixed the method of dealing with the pastor in case of alleged delinquency. This article required that the matter should be stated to the corporation, and that a committee of



five should be appointed to investigate the charges (especially to wait upon the pastor), and to report to the corporation within a month. If there were then need of action, a motion to displace the pastor would be in order, to be acted upon by all the incorporators and also by the male white communicants, *whether pew-holders or not*, within another thirty-day interval. At this time the pastor should receive notice of the accusations against him and should have an opportunity to be heard in his own behalf. A *two-thirds* vote of both communicants and corporators was required for adverse action. This article was ignored by the opponents of Mr. Adams, although attention was repeatedly called to it by his friends. Sure of the rightfulness of his case and the inequity of the action of his opponents, and supported by such contributions as his supporters in the congregation were able to make, the pastor held on for two years; that is, the eight men in control having cut the salary to almost nothing, the majority of the congregation maintained the salary by their gifts.

In such a deadlock as this it would seem a serious defect of Congregationalism that there was no authority or court of appeal to which the whole matter could be referred for settlement. In this polity there is no high court, nor any bishop; each church is the arbiter of its own destiny. But there is an avenue of escape in the fellowship of the churches. Any Congregational church needing help from the outside may call a council of neighboring or available churches to give advice in the premises looking toward the settlement of a dispute. Such advice is usually accepted by the church in difficulty. But this church suffered from its extreme independency. Furthermore, it was unfortunate in its isolation. It had no neighboring churches to call upon. The nearest was Jacksonville, and that was but recently organized. It was not until 1882 that Circular was entered in the denominational Year Book as a Congregational church.

Attempts to secure help in this sad situation were made by local intervention, without process of law. On February 26, 1877, Deacon Roberts, one of the supporters of the pastor,

submitted to the corporation the following plan. The differences were to be submitted to five professing Christians chosen thus: the pastor and the president (of the church) should each choose one member from the church; these two selected should each select a communing member from some other evangelical church in the city; these four lay members should then choose as chairman a fifth, who should be the pastor of some evangelical church in the city. After full inquiry was made, the decision of this committee should be accepted as final by both sides to the controversy. This plan was summarily rejected by a vote of eight to five, the same irreconcilable eight. Another attempt was made to secure advice from three ministers of the city.

This advice came as the result of the action of three members of the church, Messrs. Mitchell, Ball, and Roberts (two opponents and one friend of the pastor), who laid the situation before three local pastors, not as arbitrators but evidently in some detail, to justify their giving their written opinion. They traced the entire trouble back to the unofficial meeting called by the pastor on the Sunday morning in April, 1876, and asked if the effect of that meeting could not be neutralized. It was alleged by one side that the pastor had been discourteous and schismatic, and had acted in violation of the constitution; by the other side, that the meeting was not unconstitutional, because it was not legislative but called for the information of the pastor, and that he merely endeavored to restrain debate not appropriate to the occasion. Their advice was that the pastor state in writing that he sought only for information, not for legal action, and that if the congregation agreed with the corporation, he felt that he could no longer continue pastor of the church if he were to be denied any relation to the Sunday school; furthermore, that he was "grieved" that he had offended some by his words and actions. They further stated that his action was "adopted though not designed to offend the official body," and that he ought to express regret to that body. Secondly, they advised that the "offended brethren" accept such a statement by the pastor,

and, furthermore, as they have "grieved the pastor by sundry acts and expressions," that they ought to express regret to him for all unkind words and conduct and "without delay reconsider and annul all official acts by which the relation of the pastor to the Church has been affected." They also recommended that the reciprocal statements be given at a meeting called for that purpose.

The pastor thereupon expressed his acceptance of this procedure, and Deacon Roberts offered resolutions to the effect that the communicants request the corporation to adopt the recommendations and annul their official acts as suggested. The resolutions were adopted by a vote of 8 to 7, the incorrigible seven voting against it. At a meeting of the corporation they were able to defeat the proposition by a vote of 7 to 6. So the hopes of any peaceful reconciliation were abandoned.

This painful situation dragged on for nearly a year. The pastor continued to function. Those who opposed him refused to co-operate in any way. In July a legal firm communicated to the corporation that they had been retained to secure for the "majority of the male white communicants" the privileges of worship in their church, and to give notice that the use of any of the funds of the church for the defense of the officers against the members will be considered "a breach of trust." The cash balance of the church at this time was reported as \$903; the amount due the building fund, \$1,474; the invested funds, \$14,220. An attempt was made, at the annual meeting in the following January, to secure the admission of four male members declared to be qualified as members of the corporation, but this was voted down by the usual eight. In the next six months the amount paid to the pastor was \$25; the amount paid to the church treasurer was \$50.

The end of the long struggle came in April, 1878, when the pastor presented his resignation to the corporation. With it was a letter, signed by a large number of the men and women members of the church, reciting the events of the past two years and advising him now to resign. They mention the



illegal way in which the officers had sought to depose the pastor, and the high-handed way in which they had prevented male members of the church from having a vote in the corporation, and their refusal to join in any plans for conciliation. It was mentioned that the Sunday school had been formally brought under the supervision of the church by common lay action, a measure for which the pastor had been contending. This letter reveals that it was only in deference to the urgency of the people's desire that Mr. Adams had not resigned long before, in fact, as early as October, 1876. The letter refers to the fact that "we have no ecclesiastical court of appeals," hence no recourse except to the court of common law. This they deprecate as bringing reproach on the church in the community. Therefore with "great sorrow, yet in justice to yourself" they consent to the severance of the pastoral relationship, asking, however, that the records be cleared of the measures passed against him and that the arrears of salary be now paid him. They felt that in losing him they must also lose their "ancestral Church," now dominated by a small group of men who had overridden its constitution and by-laws and grossly mistreated its minister.

Mr. Adams in his reply expressed his deep appreciation of the long-suffering spirit of the people, and counselled, if they withdrew from the church, to do so only temporarily, and expressed his fear for the extinction of the church. He also expressed his determination not to compromise with the corporation in regard to the unpaid salary, amounting to over \$2,000, but to resign in any case, and this he did. He closed his letter to the corporation thus:

"Sincerely I have endeavored faithfully to discharge my whole duty as your minister in preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified, and in the pastoral office, and never more earnestly or at greater sacrifice than when seeking the past two years to maintain for yourselves as for all my people the principles of Scriptural polity on which alone an Independent Church can exist. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you the less I am loved."

The inevitable consequence of the resignation of the pastor

was the loss of many members of the church, though not at once. The incorporators issued a statement to the press in which they endeavored to justify their action during the two years of conflict. To one at this distance from the scene, with a fair knowledge of nothing more than the records, their statement appears perverse and insincere. Soon members began to ask for letters to other churches in the city. As barely 80 members could be found in the list of 1876, the petition of 43 in December of that year for the re-opening of the church certainly showed a practical majority of the white members whose support of the pastor was unquestioned. The officers of the Sunday school, all of whom were friends of the former pastor, promptly resigned, and a new set of redoubtable incorporators took their places. For a long time regrets were expressed that the Sunday school did not seem to grow. In December, 1879, the Sunday school adopted the International Uniform System of lessons which Mr. Adams had first proposed.

After about a dozen members had withdrawn, the corporation passed a motion that the absentees should be notified either to come back or take their letters by August 23, 1880. Thirty-five were written to. Three requested letters; four indicated that they wished to retain membership; twenty-eight were cited to appear before the church, that is, before the eight male members who then constituted it, and answer to the charge of neglect of duty or be dropped without a hearing. None appeared. One, though not in town, expressed a desire to retain her membership. Another, Mrs. S. Legaré Bullen, wrote a letter of some heat addressed to the president of the church, Mr. H. W. Mitchell. Mrs. Bullen refers to the official letter to non-attendants threatening dismissal from the "Church of my fore-fathers" as a self-assumed authority of "one tenth of the congregation over the other nine tenths," and refuses to recognize this "select party" as having the authority of the church. She writes, "I will never again unite myself with a society where I shall have no voice either to defend or reject its officers, and yet be subject to be taxed and expected 'to fulfil all duties, etc.'" She refers to the "charges

brought against an excellent pastor not one of which they could prove," and adds: "The Lord himself espoused his cause. He brought him back to this city to die among his innumerable friends, to be vindicated in the face of his discomfited enemies by the universal respect and honor bestowed upon him at his funeral obsequies."

The twenty-seven members who, though summoned, did not appear were summarily dropped on September 13 by vote of the old guard of eight male members, who alone did the business of the church.



## BEGINNING AGAIN

**I**N the period immediately following the departure of Mr. Adams, while there was no pastor, the corporation reports "much labor and time expended in cleaning the yard, laying out new walks and trimming the shrubbery," and that the west and north line fences were much dilapidated. The church acquired the lot leading from Meeting Street to the lecture room, at first by paying a nominal rent of five dollars a year to the Clergy Society; eventually the lot was deeded to the church and a walk was laid out to afford a direct entrance from the street to the lecture room (evidently what is now the long walk to the archway). The corporation then proceeded to make extensive repairs and improvements on the lecture room, costing over \$3,000, besides \$260 for the high steps and railings leading to the front door. In addition to this the iron fence on the west or street side was erected, at a cost totaling \$1,000.\* The debt of the church to the building fund (\$1,474) was paid up in bonds the latter part of 1879, but the corporation began to borrow from it in 1880, and shortly arranged that all the net income from it should be paid to the church for current expenses. Ten pews were given up, and the income from rentals for six months (July to December, 1879) got as low as \$27.50. After a minister was engaged, a few more pews were taken when it was voted that they could be rented again. By 1883 as many as seven new pew-renters appear, and the amount received in 1883 was \$135. At the end of his first year the new minister, Rev. A. H. Missildine, in-

\*The committee on this work reported on the "very neat and chaste appearance of the building and its cemetery," and invoke the divine blessing that this outward renovation . . . may be but the shadow of a great renewing of her members by the Holy Ghost."

formed the corporation that he could not renew the engagement with them, as the present salary (\$1,200) was not sufficient for the expenses of his family. At first it was voted to continue the same salary and secure another minister, but a month later, in February, it was voted that the salary be increased to \$1,600, and the pastor remained at that figure. It should be said that when Mr. Missildine came to Charleston, \$400 was granted to him for moving expenses. In 1882 one hundred and fifty new hymn-books, called "Spiritual Songs," were purchased at a little over a dollar a piece.

During the years immediately following there was considerable growth in the membership of the church, amounting to forty or more. In 1885 ten young people united with the church, and that year a vacation from July to October 1 was granted to the pastor, and \$100 toward travelling expenses. This year and the next were eventful years for the church and the city. In 1885 a cyclone tore off the roof of the building. Then there were the Moody and Sankey meetings in 1886, which roused much interest and brought twenty-one people into the church. Meetings were continued in Circular Church by an evangelist. Then came the earthquake, which brought historic destruction to both the church and the city. It meant heavier bills for repairs than the cyclone. It shook the walls of the old church ruin till they had to be removed.

#### SHAKEN BY THE EARTHQUAKE

Profoundly moved by these events, twelve men of the church met at the home of Dr. Brown. We quote in part the mind of this meeting as recorded at that time: "Earnest has been the desire of this people to rebuild their Church, the only one in the State, Congregational in polity, in which Whites worship. Loss succeeding loss has reduced her funds, and her people, few in number and with little of this world's goods, are not able to build her walls. Must this light, which has burned brightly for near if not fully two centuries, go out? Shall the only Congregational Church in the State be

permitted to go down without most strenuous efforts to save her? No, brethren, it cannot be, it must not be. We will commit our case to the Head of the Church, and believing his Word, we will strive to revive her, and in the name of our Lord to rebuild the old waste places."

Accordingly a committee of three (H. W. Mitchell, W. S. Brown, and A. G. Cudworth) was appointed to make suitable presentations to the Congregational churches at large to secure assistance. A circular was prepared and sent out (1,000 copies), but, following better advice, a representative of the church was sent North to present the case in person. The immediate returns were about \$1,200. Many later gifts were received, and a loan was made by the Congregational Building Society.

At the annual meeting in January, 1888, the corporation decided that expenses must be cut by reducing the minister's salary from \$1,600 to \$1,200 a year. When Mr. Missildine was notified of this, he was reported by his son to be suffering from nervous prostration from the developments of his work. He took the proposed reduction to mean that the people no longer wanted him as their pastor, and told them he had no funds with which to seek another place. They offered him finally "a donation" of \$300, and the relation seems to have been thus closed. By September of the same year they engaged Rev. Henry M. Grant as pastor for twelve months at \$1,500 a year. Thus the same group dealt summarily with a second minister inside of twelve years. They regarded the church as only a financial corporation living on income received by inheritance from the fathers of the church in the past, to which they made but little or no contribution even in time of emergency.



## A NEW MINISTER AND A NEW CHURCH

IT is evident that preparations for building a new church went on under the pastorate of Mr. Grant, though the records are exceedingly meagre. At this time the corporation bought from the Clergy Society, for \$434, the piece of land running from the street to the portico of the building then used as a church. On August 5, 1890, a contract was made with Henry Oliver for building a new church for \$14,000, under the direction of architects Stephenson and Green. A "certificate of completion" filed with the Congregational Home Mission Society in New York, dated January 1, 1891, states the value of the land to be \$2,000, and the cost of the building \$18,000, exclusive of the old bricks taken from the former building and used for the outer facing of the walls. The value of these bricks had been carefully estimated in 1873, by architect Parker, as \$2,835.

In July, 1889, the venerable constitution was once more revised and adopted. It enlarges on the exact method by which the pastor may be dismissed. It is to be noted that no person is recognized as an active, voting member of the church except male white communicants; those who are members of the corporation may include males regularly supporting the church though not communicants, but in general the male communicants and incorporators were identical.

Appropriate exercises for laying the corner-stone were held on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1890. A copper box wrapped in asbestos was placed in the south curve of the wall at the juncture of the southwest vestibule with the main wall 9 feet 6 inches from the inner doorway, 2 feet 6 inches above the floor. It contains a church history by Rev. A. H. Missil-

dine, an historical sketch by Rev. H. M. Grant, lists of various officers and members, articles of faith, etc., an old memorandum of the laying of the corner-stone in 1804, copies of current newspapers, a directory of Charleston, and various coins. The box was laid in place by Master Keith Brown, a child of the sixth generation from Deacon Josiah Smith, who laid the corner-stone of the old Circular Church, July 14, 1804. An address was made by Dr. C. S. Vedder, venerable pastor of the French Huguenot Church. Quoting Rev. F. W. Robertson, he said, "I love a church with a history," and recalled that Hollanders, Huguenots, and Scotchmen had united with New Englanders in the early organization of this church nearly one hundred years before there was a state of South Carolina.

The building was partly financed by a loan of \$2,500 secured from the American Congregational Union (later called the Congregational Church Building Society) payable in five years in equal installments: this society added a grant of \$1,000. The American Missionary Association also contributed \$1,000. The church was ready to be dedicated on January 17, 1892. The service of dedication was shared by pastors of many of the churches of the city. There were 78 pews in the new church, assessed at from \$10 to \$25, making a possible income from pews of \$1,430. It was arranged that the pew rents should be paid by the envelope system of weekly offerings. Sixteen pews were taken at once; this made a total of \$340. In February, 1892, the Ladies' Home Missionary Society applied for the use of the chapel then vacated and on January 23, 1893, this was granted to them by the corporation for an indefinite period, and remains in their charge to the present day.

A new vocalion costing \$1,250 and placed in the church gallery was secured through the initiative of the pastor, Rev. H. M. Grant, and the generosity of the Ladies' Society, which

NOTE. David Ramsay's *History of the Church* was copied at this time at a cost of \$7. This copy is not extant. There is a printed copy in the Library of the University of South Carolina and also one in the Congregational Library at 14 Beacon St., Boston, Massachusetts.

promised \$325 and finally gave \$490. The corporation borrowed \$700 from the Clergy Society. The vocation served the church until the installation of a pipe organ in 1931. The prominence of the Mitchell family in the counsels of the corporation for many years was shown in 1893 by the fact that all the offices, president, secretary, treasurer, and sexton, besides the chairmanship of the music committee, were held by gentlemen of this family. H. W. Mitchell resigned as president in May, 1894, after twenty-three years in office, except for a short interval when it was held by Mr. Primer. Mr. Mitchell's term as treasurer of the Clergy Society was much longer,—over fifty-four years and three months (1856 to 1911).

The pastorate of Rev. H. M. Grant lasted ten years and was of great value to the church. Under his leadership the long-hoped-for building was erected and furnished, the church was brought into a working fellowship with the rest of the denomination, the congregations grew for several years, the Bible school increased, and the children were given a part in the worship of the church in song. Especially notable was the Christian Endeavor Society; this organization took a position of leadership in the city, and the pastor became the second state president. It should be said that the pastor gave an unusual example of pastoral generosity. When the local church assumed a debt of \$2,500, to be paid back in annual instalments of \$500, Mr. Grant offered to provide half that sum annually, and did so for several years, either from his own pocket or from sources outside the church. Later he had the sum reduced to \$300 a year and saw this paid before he resigned in 1898. When the depression of 1893-1894 came on, Charleston was hard hit. Families were impoverished or moved away to secure work. The pastor remitted \$250 of his salary for three years to relieve the church finances. An unnamed member of the corporation gave \$150 one year. Altogether the pastor brought into the treasury of the church, in his ten-years pastorate, one third of his salary, or \$5,000. Mr. Grant referred to this, in his affectionate letter of resig-



nation (September, 1898), not with bitterness or pride but as part of the "ten happy years" during which they "had lovingly toiled and sacrificed to re-instate the Church in honor and usefulness." "Having shared your prosperity, your pastor could not cowardly fail you in adversity." He concludes: "I have regarded my work among you as transitional . . . preparatory to perpetuating far into the modern time a usefulness for the new Circular Church as great and unique of its kind as, before the Civil War, was that of the old Circular Church." "For all their generous and courteous treatment of mine and me" he thanks them, and closes with a quotation from 1 Thessalonians 2:8: "We were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." Such a letter from such a pastor is indeed a precious inheritance for this church to treasure. One is able to see a little under the surface of mere transactions in dollars and cents with which the records are chiefly concerned.

## A PERIOD OF SHORT PASTORATES

THIS period up to 1917 is characterized by short pastorates, the longest being that of Rev. Gardner S. Butler, four years. The following is a list of the ministers who served from 1899 to 1917.

Rev. J. Edward Kirby	July 1899 to October 1901
" Augustus A. Davisson	February, 1902—April, 1904
" J. Sherman Calhoun	April, 1904—September, 1906
" Gardner S. Butler *	December, 1906—September, 1910
" Benjamin Rush Thornberry	January, 1911—May 1, 1911
" E. Cullom Grimshaw	March, 1912—September, 1914
" A. S. Gaffney	February, 1915—October, 1916

The pastorate of J. Edward Kirby started off with much promise but was unfortunately a short one. He was a young man who later became well known in the denomination both in the South and in the West. He was installed October 22, 1899. Some of the sentences of his statement of faith strike a new note of liberalism in the history of this church. He declared for a faith as "broad as the Bible and as wide as the holy purpose of God" and went on to say that "Each individual has a right to think for himself and reach conclusions." "The Bible," he said, "has a human as well as a divine side." Again, "The door of the church should be as wide as the gate of heaven, its fellowship as free as the fellowship of the angels." "Dogmatic differences," he said, "in the orthodox denominations, and some of the heretical ones, are not enough to affect any life seriously." In regard to relations with the colored brethren he said: "A man who is worthy of God's

\* Mr. Butler resigned on account of ill health September 26, 1907, and was recalled May 1, 1908, apparently with recovered health.

consideration should be worthy of mine." He went on to say: "The church has a mission in the world. Work and worship are co-ordinates," and concluded: "We believe in the fullest range for freedom of thought."

With such an introduction as this it is not strange that he touched new hearts and attracted alert minds. During his first year forty people were received into the membership of the church. The Sunday school flourished, having many attendants from other churches, especially the Lutheran. One reason was that the hour was 4 P.M. Most of the others met in the forenoon. A little church paper called "The Charleston Congregationalist" was published under the auspices of the church. Mr. Kirby's pastorate ended all too soon, October 1, 1901, with his call to the presidency of Atlanta Theological Seminary, a new institution just getting under way in Atlanta. It may be said that at this time the church was paying only \$1,000 a year and making efforts to clear up its indebtedness to Mr. Grant, besides owing about \$3,000 on the new building. At this time, March 8, 1901, the church suffered the loss by death of Deacon William S. Brown, long an active and beloved member. His hospitable home was a center for the young people of the church for a generation.

During these years the church sent delegates to distant Congregational conferences in Florida and Georgia and once, in 1910, to a laymen's missionary meeting in Columbia. It sent the pastor and Deacon Harvey to the installation of Dr. Henry A. Atkinson, in Central Church, Atlanta. It gave generous gifts for sufferers in Galveston, San Francisco, and even in faraway India. It was in December, 1909, that the corporation received a request from the Ladies' Home Missionary Society that individual Communion cups be secured with an offer from them to pay half the cost. The offer was accepted. After using the individual cups for a year the church went back to the use of the old silver cups. Finally about 16 months later, April 10, 1912, the individual cups were brought into use again, with the proviso that the old service could be used by any that had "conscientious scruples."



It is rather striking to find the church gathering the ministry of the city for an ecclesiastical event, the installation of a minister. When Mr. Grimshaw was installed (May 24, 1912) the principal part was taken by Rev. A. T. Sherill, dean of Atlanta Theological Seminary, assisted by Dr. Charles S. Vedder, pastor of the Huguenot Church, Rev. John Kershaw, rector of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Rev. J. K. G. Frazer, D.D., pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Rev. George T. Harmon, pastor of the Spring St. Methodist Church, Rev. A. T. Nelson, pastor of Cannon St. Baptist Church, and Rev. C. Armand Miller, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church. It would seem that the whole Protestant fellowship of the city was represented at the installation. It was noted also that Messrs. E. T. Burdell and C. M. Fitzsimmon were installed as deacons by Rev. Mr. Sherill. In this year mention is made of the fact that a pulpit gown had been made for Mr. Grimshaw, but as he took it away with him the custom of wearing a gown was not established.

In 1911 the question arose as to the conference membership of this church. It was settled by letters from the secretary of the Florida Conference and Secretary Asher Anderson of the National Council that the membership of the lone Congregational church in South Carolina lay in the Florida Conference. In later years, when there were several Congregational churches in North and South Carolina, it became a member of the Congregational Conference of the Carolinas.

There were evidences in this period that the old order was changing. In 1908 Mr. H. W. Mitchell, Jr., resigned as clerk, after holding the office for thirty years. Mr. W. H. Harvey took over the office of senior deacon from Deacon H. W. Mitchell, becoming treasurer of the deacons' charity fund. Deacon Mitchell himself died in 1911, at the age of 88, having made a remarkable record for holding important church offices through most of his life. The pastorate of Mr. Grimshaw was dissolved by the corporation in September, 1914, with a sudden conclusiveness that argued some unusual cause, though none was specified. In the following February Rev.

A. C. Gaffney was called to the pastorate. At the annual meeting in the following January two letters were received from the women of the church, a most unusual event. The first letter was from Miss J. C. Steiber, Secretary and Treasurer of the Sunday school, presenting requests that the keys of the library be not handed over to colored substitutes and that the sexton be present every Sunday; the second was from Miss Charlotte E. Lance, requesting that "a plain and full account from all sources of income, also from all the various institutions of the church, with a full and plain account of all disbursements of the same, be printed or typewritten and sent to every member of the Church that all may take an intelligent and vital interest in the Church and its affairs. This to be made a rule by the Corporation." She also agreed to increase her weekly pledge if this be done and the pastor's salary increased. No immediate action on the last request was recorded, but the corporation proceeded to what proved to be an overturn of the official set-up of the church. There were twelve present, the male voters. They were evenly divided for two ballots between the old officers and a new slate, or rather candidates for president, Mr. A. G. Cudworth, the present incumbent, and Mr. W. H. Harvey. A change of one vote on the third ballot elected Mr. Harvey (one not voting), 7 to 4. Each of the old incumbents was nominated for each of the other offices, each declined, and a new candidate was chosen. The defeated officials felt the election to be a reflection upon their administration, and withdrew with their families from the church. Only two of them ever returned,—Mr. Fitzsimmons in a few months and Mr. H. W. Mitchell, Jr., after some twenty years.

At the semi-annual meeting that followed in July changes were proposed in the constitution making every communing member of the church, twenty-one years of age, a member of the corporation, and leaving out the word "male" in the proper article, so that it should henceforth read, "The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it." The incorporation, or rather the enfranchisement, of the women of the church was evidently the main object of the

"bloodless revolution" which took place. The minister's salary was increased, but by only ten dollars a month. It was only the next October that Mr. Gaffney resigned, in a very kind and warm-hearted letter. He said that he had declined several calls, "until now, as I felt called upon to remain with you until rooted and grounded firmly upon a spiritual and Congregational basis. Believing these ends to have been achieved," he felt that he could depart with good conscience. The time had passed when a little group of men, devoted and honest no doubt, could for a generation or two, with narrow and legalistic mind, control and really hinder the spiritual growth of the church.



## THE LADIES' HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY

IN this church, which from the beginning until 1917 had been managed almost exclusively by its "male white" members, and in which these same males had organized their Clergy Society as early as 1789, the presence of women in the church had been largely overlooked, except when contributions were needed. But there is a third corporation whose members are women only. The Ladies' Home Missionary Society began far back in 1816, when James Madison was President and Dr. Benjamin M. Palmer was pastor. It was first known as the "Congregational and Presbyterian Female Association for Assisting in the Education of Pious Young Men for the Gospel Ministry." So for many years it was a union of Congregational and Presbyterian women, and its primary end was educational. Its secondary purpose was Christian work in all its branches. In 1883 its name was changed, and its work continued under separate auspices.

The following summary of the work was made in 1870, which shows how substantial had been their gifts for theological education:

For individual students	\$5,590
For Columbia Theological Seminary (S. C.)	\$5,434
For Princeton Theological Seminary (N. J.)	2300
For Andover Theological Seminary (Mass.)	500
For American Education Society (N. Y.)	450
For Yale Education Society (Conn.)	100
For General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church	675

With some smaller items this made a total of \$14,239.

There was an interval from 1861 to 1889 when no money was designated for students. From that date until 1922,

\$2,500 was given to some forty students, \$2,500 for church aid and \$300 for other benevolences. A loan of \$500 was made to the church. From 1923 to 1930, \$640 was given for student aid, \$1,080 for church aid, and \$550 for other benevolences. Besides this, \$1,000 was expended on Lance Hall; of this \$500 was a legacy from Charlotte Lance. At the present time there is an educational fund, held by this society, of approximately \$2,000. A few years ago from forty to fifty men and some women were engaged in religious work who have been aided by this society. It now functions both as a church aid society and as a missionary organization. It now has two divisions and meets monthly both for mission study and for business. When there is work to be done or money to be given, the women are ready to do it. A recent piece of work was the carpeting of the church at a cost of \$500. This society has entire charge of the chapel building, including repairs and rentals. The upper floor is rented to the Musical Art Club for concerts.

## DR. PADDOCK AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

VERY soon after the departure of Rev. A. S. Gaffney a call was extended to Dr. George E. Paddock of Tryon, North Carolina. He accepted the call on December 12, 1916, and began work the third Sunday in the following January. It was quite a transition from a young man to an elderly man with most of his career behind him, but he was well liked by the people. He was a westerner, ordained in Kansas City, Kansas. He held pastorates in the Middle West until called to the Congregational Church in Boise, Idaho. From there he went to Portland, Oregon, to be state superintendent under the auspices of the Congregational Home Missionary Society. After a few years in Portland he came in February, 1916, to Tryon on account of the critical illness of his wife. He was especially attracted by the young men then active in the Charleston church. His pastorate began almost simultaneously with the participation of the United States in the First World War, and the church took an active part in the service of both soldiers and sailors who filled the city. At the semi-annual meeting of the church on July 9, 1917, the presence of the ladies is recorded for the first time in the history of the church. There were seven together with nine men. A Yard Committee of three ladies was appointed,—Miss Charlotte Lance, Miss Annie Graham, and Mrs. W. H. Harvey.

A program of social service for the men of the army and navy under the direction of Miss Ruth Graham, sponsored by the Ladies' Society, was begun in the early summer of 1917. Lance Hall, the lower floor of the old chapel (renamed for Miss C. E. Lance now deceased), the first hall in the city to



be opened for this purpose, was used from 1 P.M. to 9 P.M. as a recreational and writing center until the American Library Association made it also a reading center. Socials were held every Wednesday night, with special parties at Halloween and Christmas, until the war was over. Refreshments were furnished by small assessments on the members of the Home Missionary Society. The service men showed genuine appreciation of what was done. They assisted in the care of the hall and often furnished entertainment.

In the fall of 1921 a new furnace was installed in the church at a cost of \$1,809, borrowed of the Clergy Society. A thousand dollars of this was repaid on receipt of a bequest of that sum from the estate of Miss Charlotte Lance. In 1922 the walls of the church interior were repainted, one half of the cost of this being met by a donation of \$600 from the Improvement Fund and the Ladies' Home Missionary Society. While the work was being done, services were held in the parish hall, then being rented by the Musical Art Club of the city. Dr. Paddock's pastorate was notable for the number of weddings solemnized of couples who became the future families of the church.

Toward the end of Dr. Paddock's term it was voted to affiliate temporarily with the Congregational Home Missionary Society, so that an appropriation might be sought to supplement the salary of the future pastor. In April, 1926, Dr. Paddock's resignation took effect; he retired from the ministry, was made pastor emeritus, and lived the rest of his life on his farm near Charleston.

## A CO-OPERATIVE PASTORATE

**A**FTER a three-months preliminary engagement Rev. George N. Edwards was called from Walla Walla, Washington, to begin his work as of August 1, 1926. He had spent ten years in Pacific Coast pastorates, then another ten years in the work of the denomination in Montana, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The Congregational Home Missionary Society of New York backed the work here with a liberal appropriation, and also provided Miss Hazel R. Brownson as special assistant for most of the first two years. The church raised its quota of the salary to \$2,000. In the first summer Mr. Edwards and Miss Brownson started a daily vacation Bible school, which grew in successive years until it increased to an attendance of nearly five hundred, with three churches co-operating, holding the three departments in their several buildings (Citadel Square Baptist, Bethel Methodist, and Circular). Not less than five churches assisted in the teaching and financing of the school.

In 1927 the members of the church raised about \$250 for improving the grounds, planting shrubbery and hedges, and putting in new lawns and flowers. On July 4, 1928, Mr. Andrew B. Murray, an Episcopalian of Charleston, gave the church \$5,000 in city bonds, to be known as the Mary L. Bennett Fund, the interest to be used for the upkeep of the yard and especially of the Bennett plot. A committee on grounds is appointed annually to use the income in the care of the church-yard. The same year the members of the church raised \$300 for the purchase of a new piano.

Miss Brownson led in the plans of a young people's dramatic club, which lasted for many years. It produced plays,

religious pageants, and special musical programs for Sunday evenings, and may be said to have started church pageantry in Charleston.

Plans for the purchase of a pipe organ were begun in 1929. A committee of seven, with the pastor as chairman and Mrs. R. F. Britton as treasurer, was appointed. The sum of \$225, which had been raised toward the re-establishment of the Lance Fund, was appropriated to this purpose. A subscription was started among the members, and the Easter offering was devoted to this purpose for several years. Letters were sent out to former members and friends of the church, and some persons in the city outside the congregation were solicited. In the summer of 1929, while on his vacation, Mr. Edwards raised some \$1,200 from a few benevolent persons in Connecticut; one of these, Mr. H. B. Tuttle of Naugatuck, gave \$500. During the fall the chairman got in touch with Mr. Francis B. Garvan of New York, a collector of antique colonial silver, who immediately became interested in the purchase of the old Communion silver of the church, dated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After due deliberation the church decided to sell four of the eleven pieces, for which Mr. Garvan paid \$2,000, to be used for the organ fund. He and his wife then loaned these four pieces to the Charleston museum, where they have been placed on exhibition.

The committee finally decided to buy the old organ of Westminster Presbyterian Church as a base for a new organ to be rebuilt and installed by Mr. J. N. Reynolds of Atlanta, with the addition of a set of new Reagan chimes, a new console, and various other additions, and partially electrified. The console was adroitly fitted into the space originally intended for the choir, and the major part of the organ was placed in the upper gallery, covered by a walnut casing exactly matching the woodwork of the pulpit platform. This casing was purchased from Trinity Methodist Church. The entire cost was about \$4,500; the organ was finished and dedicated in April, 1931. A statement by the treasurer, on January 13, 1930, showed the composition of the fund at that time to be as follows:



Donations from the church	\$506.55
Donations from people in Charleston not connected with the church	251.30
Donations from people outside of Charleston	1,538.60
Sale of Communion silver to F. B. Garvan	2,000.00
Interest	44.60
	<hr/>
	\$4341.05

All labor and materials were paid in cash, and some balance remained.

Mr. W. H. Harvey retired from the presidency of the church in March, 1929, after thirteen years in office, and in the following January Mr. R. F. Britton was elected. He served through the Depression, a term of nine years. These were terms of long and faithful service. In 1930, when the city of Charleston celebrated the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding on the present site, this church, as a contemporary with Saint Philip's Episcopal Church for the entire period, joined in the celebration by putting into the procession a float carrying a reproduction of the original meeting-house, built by the men of the church from the design on a map of 1706 in the possession of the Charleston Historical Society.

From the time of the adoption of the budget system, in 1924, and the "Every Member Canvass," the benevolences of the church began to rise. The amount given in 1925 on apportionment for missions was nearly \$100; in 1927 it was nearly \$175; by 1929 and 1930 it ran well over \$300, this being about a tenth of the church treasurer's receipts for current expenses for 1930. The Ladies' Home Missionary Society and the Sunday school gave a part of the benevolences, but the major part came from weekly offerings of the church. As the Depression went on the amount decreased until, in 1939 and 1940, it was about \$150. The total for fourteen years, 1927-1940, inclusive, was \$3,122, or an annual average of \$223 from a group of from 40 to 50 active members. Besides, there were the communion offerings for the poor and

white gifts from the Sunday school at Christmas, and for about two years the ladies of the church collected and gave away two substantial baskets of food a week. A Benevolence Treasurer was first elected in January, 1927,—Mrs. Gertrude Thompson. Mrs. C. E. Higdon has held this position since January, 1929, and Mrs. Thompson became the church treasurer.

Evangelistic speakers were secured at three different times for periods of a week or ten days, but without great success in increasing members. After Dr. James R. Clinton's visit in 1937 the men of the church made a concerted effort to increase church attendance for three months, with good results. In January, 1930, this church joined with the Protestant churches of the city in a Kernihan campaign, making a comprehensive visitation of all the families of Charleston. Five new members were received.

In 1931, when the financial problem became quite acute, on account of heavy repairs required for the furnace and a demand from the city for street-paving assessments long unpaid, it was found possible to borrow \$1,000 from the Congregational Church Building Society, payable in ten years at a very low rate of interest. The annual payments were met promptly until the loan was paid off in 1941. Again, in 1933, when the church was much in arrears on salaries, it was relieved by a generous gift of \$500 from Mr. Howard B. Tuttle of Naugatuck, Connecticut. Another transaction with the Building Society should be recorded. This was the renewal of the old mortgage given by this church in 1891 to complete the new building. This, being a "grant" and not a loan, bears no interest and will never be asked for unless the property passes into other hands than the Congregational Church. It was renewed to 1991.

It seems that about once in forty years Circular Church has taken occasion to revise its constitution. At the last revision in 1889 not many changes were made, but at the semi-annual meeting in 1931 a committee was appointed, with the pastor as chairman, to draw up a new constitution conforming

to present usage. The new constitution was reported and approved at the annual meeting in January, 1932, and formally adopted at a special meeting on April 20. For the first time since the eighteenth century the doctrinal parts adopted in 1778 were changed by a three-fourths vote and the so-called "creed" of the Congregational National Council of 1913, including its statement of polity, was adopted. This is not a denominational creed, but is optional for any individual church. It was decided to have this constitution printed, with an historical sketch and other data, and this was done in 1934.

Mention should be made of the valuable records of the church. The larger part of them since 1732 are preserved in well-bound books. The greater part of these were copied by workers of the WPA in 1936 for the University of South Carolina. Three typewritten copies were made, one of which is in the possession of the church. The first book goes back to 1695 and is of exceptional historical value. For its preservation its pages have been lined with chiffon. The book had to be taken apart and rebound. The cost of the chiffon (\$25) was met by Mayor John F. Maybank, and the book was rebound by the church.

One of the unusual features of this pastorate was the number of fellowship services held with other churches. Union services outside one's denomination were very uncommon in Charleston. As there was no union Thanksgiving service, the pastor invited one or two neighboring churches for a union meeting, without a very encouraging response; but in a few years, through the leadership of our young people's society, a union sunrise Thanksgiving Day service was established, meeting on Battery Park, which grew in numbers and in the number of churches participating, until the attendance ran over two hundred and nearly all denominations took part. There was even some rivalry to see which denomination could turn out the largest number. Another unique combination was a union service of Circular with the Unitarian Church on the eve of Thanksgiving, alternating between the two as to place. At the first meeting in 1930, Rev. J. F. Burkhart, the Uni-



tarian minister, remarked that this was the first time since their division, one hundred and thirteen years ago, that these two churches had met together.

Another plan of union meetings was worked out for summer Sunday evenings in our churchyard. This was shared for two years by Saint Michael's Episcopal, the First Presbyterian, and Saint John's Lutheran. The ministers took turns in preaching, each bringing his choir for that evening. One year the week of prayer was observed in January by union meetings in each of six churches, Monday to Saturday night inclusive. The churches co-operating were the First Presbyterian, Saint Michael's, First Baptist, the French Huguenot, Saint John's Lutheran, and Circular. Each minister preached in some other church than his own, the pastor of the entertaining church conducting the service.

A rather unique series of services was held in 1931, just after the new organ was installed. On the first Sunday evening Circular Church acted as host for a service at which the pastor of Trinity Methodist Church conducted the program, bringing his organist and using Charles Wesley's hymns. The second Sunday evening was taken by the pastor and quartette of Saint John's Church, and the Lutheran order of service was used. The third evening was taken by the rector and choir of the Church of the Holy Communion, and the Episcopal order of Evening Prayer was used. A full vested choir was present, and the platform was arranged with Communion table as altar, with cross and candlesticks brought by Dr. Starr. The pastor of this church was on the platform each evening, but gave only the address: the first on "The Wesleys and their Influence on the Christian Church," the second on "Martin Luther and the Reformation," the third on "The Episcopal Church and its History." While the occasion was the introduction of the organ to organists and choirs of the city, the purpose was to deepen the sense of a common fellowship in Christ, and incidentally to illustrate the character and history of these great denominations to our own people.

It may be well to mention here that in 1938, eight years

after the Kernihan campaign, a city-wide religious census of all the white churches was taken under the auspices of the Charleston Ministerial Union.\* This was organized under a double committee of ministers and laymen, of which the pastor of this church was the general chairman. It had the active participation of the Protestant, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Jewish churches. The city was worked by wards, with lay chairmen for each ward. Canvassers to the number of a thousand were secured by the pastors from the several churches who visited the homes, block by block, on a Sunday afternoon. All returns were collated by special paid workers at the Y. M. C. A. and sorted into bundles given to the various pastors. It was found that about 33,000 people were listed in the reports. Many of the churches found unknown families to call upon and enlist in their work, besides a considerable list of undesignated persons. The memberships of the various denominations were assembled. Each church paid its quota of the cost, which was not large. The chairman of the laymen, Mr. J. O. Getty, secretary of the Y. M. C. A., rendered very valuable assistance, besides providing room in the building for the secretarial work.

Circular Church was the host of the last meeting of the Conference of Congregational Churches of the Carolinas, in October, 1935. This conference had a small membership of some fourteen churches. All but one were represented at this time. The national union of the Congregational churches with the Christian churches had taken place, and it seemed wiser for our few churches to cast in their lot with the Christian churches of the Southern Convention, which were strong in North Carolina and southern Virginia. This church voted to join the East North Carolina Conference, but after about three years, in 1939, it was voted to join the Congregational and Christian Conference of Georgia. It is now reported in the National Year Book under the Georgia Conference.

During this pastorate special attention has been given to

\* It may be noted that twice during his long pastorate Mr. Edwards was chosen president of this union.

the children and young people. A story hour was inserted in the morning service and honors given for perfect attendance. For some years a children's choir was conducted by Miss Ruth Graham, with the assistance of the organist, Mr. Princeton Dauer. This choir was vested by the Ladies' Society and reached an enrollment of sixteen. A Boy Scout Troop was organized by the pastor and ran through 1934 to 1936. The Young People's Dramatic Club functioned vigorously for many years, and was succeeded by a new and younger group sponsored by Miss Agnes Kessler as advisor.

A word should be said about the two portraits of former pastors now hanging in the lecture room. On January 10, 1938, Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Locke of Charleston presented to the church the portrait, which they had inherited, of Dr. Benjamin W. Palmer, pastor of Circular Church from 1814 to 1835. The other portrait was recently found in a forgotten closet of the church, much the worse for time and neglect, and identified as the picture of Dr. William Hollinshead, pastor from 1783 to 1817. This painting had formerly hung for some years in the home of the late Deacon William S. Brown. It was restored as well as possible, considering its condition, by a painter near Charleston.

During this pastorate but few members were lost by death, but there were two who by their long-continued services to the church were greatly missed: Mr. Richard G. Lawrence, who died September 18, 1934, had been the faithful treasurer of the church since 1916, and for many years a member of the choir. Miss Emilie E. Steiber, who died September 7, 1939, was for twenty-seven years a teacher of a class of girls who grew to womanhood and became the Bible class. She was treasurer of a special fund called the Improvement Fund, which always seemed to have money on hand when needed.

The new Pilgrim Hymnals now in use were purchased by subscription in the fall of 1938. In the same year the tornado of September 29 struck Charleston a severe blow, leaving death and destruction behind it. Unfortunately our neighbors, Saint Philip's, Saint Michael's, and the First Presbyterian



Church, suffered grievously, also the City Hall; but this church came through almost unscathed, although the wind played havoc with the trees in the church-yard. It has been thought that perhaps the steepness and circular form of our roof may have had something to do with its immunity. Two houses of the Clergy Society on King Street were damaged to the extent of over \$1,800.

Mr. Edwards was disabled by an attack of cerebral thrombosis in September, 1940, from which he partially recovered, but he was obliged to retire from the active ministry at the end of January, 1941. His prayer for this church was expressed in one of his last annual messages: "May God deliver us from the spirit of defeatism. Let us not think we cannot be any larger or any better than we have been. Our church life is a continued story; already it has many chapters, to which we are adding one. Let it be a chapter of accomplishment, well worth reading and worthy of a place in the long history behind us."

## THE CLERGY SOCIETY IN CIRCULAR CHURCH

### ORIGIN AND GROWTH

**T**HIS society, originally known by the long name "The Society for the Relief of Disabled Ministers and of the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy of the Independent or Congregational Church in the State of South Carolina," was inaugurated in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1789 by the act of the Independent or Congregational church of that city. The first action of the church is found under the date of February 1, 1789. It was voted that "measures be taken to raise a fund for the support of disabled ministers and of the widows and children of deceased ministers of the Independent or Congregational Churches in the State of South Carolina." The committee consisted of the two ministers of the church, Rev. William Hollinshead and Rev. Isaac S. Keith, Mr. Josiah Smith, Mr. Samuel Beach, and Mr. Henry W. DeSaussure. On March 1 the committee reported a set of rules formed for this purpose, which were duly considered by the church, and it was finally agreed that the society be formed under the above title, that the necessary officers be chosen on the first day of October, and that application be made to the General Assembly for an act to incorporate said society. This was "duly accomplished."

So far as we have been able to ascertain, the only other society of the kind among the Congregational churches of America which antedates this one is the "Massachusetts Charitable Society," formed in Massachusetts in 1786 and still continuing to disburse funds for the benefit of widows and orphans of Congregational ministers. The "Ministers'



CHURCH BUILDING ERECTED 1804-06

The steeple was added in 1838, and renovations costing \$26,000 were made in 1853. This building was destroyed by fire in 1861.



COMMUNION SILVER

Eleven pieces, colonial and English. The silver is first mentioned in the records of the church in May, 1754.





*Left:* Fourth and present church building on the same site. Built in 1891 and dedicated January 17, 1892

*Below:* The chancel remodelled in 1944-45 in the pastorate of C. Rexford Raymond



Annuity Society" was incorporated in Connecticut in 1813 and did service until about 1858. No other organized society or fund of this kind came into being in Connecticut until 1863. As these states are the oldest in Congregational history, it will be seen that the Clergy Society of Charleston was very near the beginning of organized ministerial relief, and so far as we know the Charleston church is the only one that has individually organized and maintained such a fund down to the present day.

The organization was proposed by Deacon Josiah Smith, who was treasurer of the church for a great many years. He was first president of this society and served from 1789 until near his death in 1826, at the age of 95. For over thirty years he had taken care of his father, Rev. Josiah Smith, who died in 1781, having been pastor of the Independent church from 1734 to 1750, and thereafter incapacitated by a kind of palsy which interfered with his speech but did not affect his mind. For those thirty years he had been what we would now call pastor emeritus. His son thought the church should have a fund for the care of its aged ministers and dependents, and eight years after his father's death led in its formation.

The original rules of the society provide for an annual meeting at noon on the first Thursday in October, when "a sermon suitable to the occasion shall be preached and a collection taken for the benefit of the Institution." Every member residing in Charleston not attending shall forfeit two shillings and sixpence. The usual officers were required, and a finance committee of five. Persons desiring to be members were admitted by a three-fourths vote at a regular meeting, and were required to pay thirty shillings on joining and an annual membership fee of twenty shillings (\$5). Every member not paying lost his vote after three months, and his membership after one year's delinquency. Any clergyman entitled to aid was to receive not less than £50 (\$250) per annum. In 1816 a resolution provided that the allowance for a disabled pastor, a widow, or children should not exceed \$1,000 per year.

It was also agreed at this date that Dr. William Hollinshead's salary, reduced by the church because of his inability to officiate, should be made up by this society so long as the diminution did not exceed \$1,000 a year. It is noted that the total amount paid out in the period 1816-1818 to three beneficiaries was £543-17 sh. and 6 pence.

Another ruling was that the widow or child of a deceased pastor might receive aid if their annual income was less than £100. In any case the capital of the society was not to be broken into.

Rule 10 of the original rules of the society provided that "Pastors, and the families of the Church in this State, denominated Independent or Congregational, alone shall be entitled to the benefits of this Institution, and to entitle a Pastor, or the family of a deceased Pastor of an Independent or Congregational Church to such benefit, the Pastor himself and fifteen of the Congregation (or any number who contribute the dues of 15) . . . must be members of the society at the time of the application."

Rule 11 states that "All claims of widows and orphans shall be superseded by marriage, or by the male orphans attaining the age of 18," with a provision for some leniency if the funds of the society permit.

No member was permitted to borrow money from the society or to be security for a borrower. After the division of the church in 1817 the constitution was amended so as to require that benefits should be awarded only to a family in which the pastor concerned had preached during his life "such doctrines as are substantially the same as those recognized by the Independent or Congregational Circular Church in which the Society was founded." Another amendment permitted the society to make occasional contributions to a pastor or family not entitled constitutionally to aid, in amounts not to exceed \$400 in a case in which "other considerations present a powerful plea and three fourths of the number present vote to make such a donation."

The earliest records show that there were 66 members as



reported by the treasurer at the first annual meeting. Of these, 47 were pew-holders in one or the other of the two Charleston congregations of the Independent church, and 3 were pastors there, leaving 16 country members, most of whom belonged to the Wappetaw Independent Church. The cause was so popular at the beginning that 18 members of the Legislature gave their certificates of pay amounting to \$2,098 (average \$116); to these were added other subscriptions, making the initial fund over \$2,755. A majority of these legislators, and also members of the state convention, were members and supporters of the church organizing the society. It is noted that four of those giving their certificates of pay were Episcopalians.\* At the first meeting the offering at the door amounted to over £22. It may be noted that the annual offering in addition to dues paid was generous, running as high as \$196. (The pounds used in these figures were rated a bit over \$4.) At the end of the first year the admission fees and dues paid amounted to £157-10sh. As the number from the Wappetaw Church sustaining their membership began to fall off the first year, the "intention of the founders of the Society was never sustained by the country churches, but left entirely in the hands of the Church in Charleston."

The first person to receive an annuity from the funds of the society was Rev. James Edmonds, a member and former pastor of the Independent church (1753-1767). He was voted £70 a year, payable quarterly in advance, on October 6, 1791. After his death in 1794 his daughter Ann Edmonds received £80 a year for many years.

At the second annual meeting the treasurer reported the total of the funds as valued at £1845-13-3. Donations besides membership dues and collections at church amounted to £566. The treasurer relates that the profit on bonds held amounted to over £749, and that he had invested in United States bonds, which yielded a considerable part of that profit. The society met alternately at each of the two churches (at

\* Edward Rutledge, John Blake, Joseph Manigault, Plowden Weston.

Meeting Street and at Archdale Street) while they remained in one organization.

A small legacy of £100 was received from Mrs. Ruth Powell in 1800, and one of £2000 from Rev. Andrew Bennett, a former pastor; but most of the funds came from dues and annual offerings, and especially from returns on investments. In 1808 the annual report shows forty-five living members. The annual dues of twenty shillings per member continued until 1813. Dr. William Hollinshead was voted \$1,000 a year when his salary ceased on account of disability (1816), but only one payment was made before his death.

#### THE SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH CORPORATION

When the Circular Church building was erected, in 1804-1806, the society began a series of loans for this purpose, which finally totalled £5131 or \$20,524. It was to bear interest from June 30, 1810. The principal stood at the same amount on October 11, 1819, with no interest paid. From July 18, 1820, to October, 1825, the minutes of the society are missing, but a schedule of the "Assets or Securities" belonging to the society on February 7, 1823, transferred by the Committee of Finance to the new treasurer, John B. Legaré, shows securities and cash totalling \$22,672, exclusive of the church loan. As to the settlement of this loan to the church, it may be said that in 1834, after much discussion, it was decided to release the church from further liability upon receiving "an assignment of *all* its property, the church excepted, and a bond for \$5,000." I find no reference to any assignment by the church, but it gave the bond and made payments on the interest until 1837, when the bond and the judgment of the society against the church were declared satisfied, and the bond was cancelled by the society. On the same date in 1834 it was voted to apply to the Legislature for a new charter, which was duly secured, giving the society discretionary power to apply "its funds to such other purposes as they may deem essential to the welfare of the said Independent-Congregational Church

in the city of Charleston." The "other purposes" means other than relief of the disabled clergy or dependents. Dr. B. M. Palmer was then about to begin drawing \$1,000 a year, but the total assets of the society were over \$53,000. In 1835 the treasurer's salary was reduced from \$400 a year to \$200, and it was voted to pay the secretary \$50 a year. This stood for many years.

After the death of Dr. Palmer the society granted his widow a pension of \$700 a year, and united with the church in erecting, within the church building, a monument to his memory. The society's share was \$238.

From this time on the Clergy Society became quite definitely committed to the policy of aiding generously, so far as its funds permitted, the Independent or Congregational Church, without detriment to its original purpose of caring for the needs of the retired clergy of this church and their dependent families. In pursuance of this policy, when it was proposed by the church to build the steeple that had so far been lacking, and the society was appealed to for a donation, it was voted, after much consideration, not to give a donation, but to guarantee the interest if the church should decide to issue \$6,000 worth of stock at 6 per cent to pay for said steeple. This was done, and for many years the society paid that interest, until it finally bought up all the stock and wiped out the debt. Not long before his retirement from the pastorate, Dr. B. M. Palmer was given a donation of \$500 that he might travel for his health. In 1849 there came a request from the church that a salary be provided for an assistant minister for Dr. Reuben Post, and \$1,500 was voted for this purpose, subject to any claim that might arise for a pension for a disabled pastor. This was raised to \$2,000; but, as the assistant minister was not found, it was never paid. In 1851, \$600 was voted Dr. Post to relieve his pecuniary embarrassment, his salary having been decreased, and \$200 was voted as aid to the salary of the church clerk and organist. In the same year the sum of \$500 was voted the pastor, that he with his family might travel for the restoration of his health.



Finally, in 1853, the church having restored the pastor's salary, it asked the society to make up any deficiency that might occur. The society voted to pay \$125 quarterly, or \$500 a year.

The Clergy Society justified its use of its funds for the church on the ground that the accumulated funds were more than enough for the pensions that might be needed for ex-pastors of the church or their families. In the act of re-incorporation secured from the Legislature in 1834 two changes were made in the original charter of 1789: the ending of the name of the society was changed from "Congregational Church in the State of South Carolina" to "Congregational Church in the City of Charleston," and a clause was added in the third section which says it shall be lawful for the society to appropriate its funds "to such charitable, benevolent, religious and other purposes for the benefit of said corporation, and of the said Independent or Congregational Church in the City of Charleston, in such manner as may be determined by a majority of the members thereof."

The project for the improvement of the architecture of the church with necessary repairs was presented by the church to the society in July, 1852. This involved a "variety of alterations and improvements connected with the pews, the pulpit, the dome and the galleries; the gas-lighting of the interior; the exterior finish of the steeple and portico &c." The cost was estimated at first as less than \$13,000, but uncertainty as to the condition of the roof raised the estimate to \$18,000. The church asked the society to pay the entire cost, and to share in the supervision of the work. The committee appointed by the society to consider the matter made both a majority and a minority report. The majority reported in favor of carrying through the project, the minority reported in favor of granting only one year's income, about \$3,000, for repairing the roof and "putting the building in a condition of neatness and cleanliness." The majority of the committee had looked into the funds of the society and found its capital fund to be not short of \$58,000, and its surplus income about \$3,000. After spending \$18,000 it would still have an income

of at least \$2,400 a year, "enough," it continues, "to pay current charges and leave sufficient surplus for the support of incumbents and for accumulation to restore the amount of capital expended on the church." The minority committee argued that the society ought not to trespass on its capital fund or go into debt. The total income of the church was not equal to its current expenses. The income of the society was a fund to which the church might resort for help in case of need, and its capital therefore ought to be carefully preserved. The society should be "free to anticipate its income" for other needs of the church, such as the salary of an assistant minister already voted. This they thought more important than "beautifying the walls." They also argued that "the object for which the fund was originally devoted" left a "sacred duty to husband and not to waste its capital." Though for several years no claim had been made upon this income for the support of any minister or his family, who can assure us that this will not happen even in the lapse of a very few years? The present pastor was of advanced age, they added, and provision might be needed for him for many years, and his successor also would have a contingent claim.

The reports occasioned considerable discussion. The majority report was adopted, and a committee appointed to co-operate with the church committee. The signers of the majority report were Richard Yeadon, George B. Locke, and Daniel L. Glen; the signers of the minority report were Henry W. Peronneau and William Tennent. The report adopted carried with it the recommendation that if the cost exceeded \$18,000, the surplus cost was to be drawn "not from the Society but from voluntary subscription." The improvements and repairs were rapidly carried out, and by the annual meeting in October, 1853, they were reported as practically finished. At the same time the committee reported that they had cost \$6,514.88 in excess of the \$18,000 appropriated. Would the society please pay this also? And they did. And the assets in October, 1854, were still over \$40,000.

## THE SOCIETY ON TRIAL

I have recounted these proceedings somewhat in detail because, as an immediate result of these expenditures on the church building, there began a series of claims upon the society which led to litigation lasting several years. At the time of the organization of this society (which as early as 1835 began to be called the Clergy Society) there were among its 66 members some 18 from the country outside Charleston, especially from what was called the "Independent Church in Christ Church" (Parish) at Wappetaw. These members soon decreased to very few, and practically ceased to participate in the support or proceedings of the society. But now, in March, 1854, this church made a formal protest against the change of name effected by the charter of 1834, which made the society a corporation for the exclusive benefit of the Charleston Congregational Church. They claimed that there were other churches in South Carolina that were entitled to like consideration. A little later the Stoney Creek Independent Presbyterian Church sent the society a protest and an invitation. First they charged misappropriation of funds and manifest breach of trust in the use of its funds in 1853. Then, in view of the isolation of Congregational churches in South Carolina, and the near likeness of Presbyterian churches, they proposed that the society now secure another change of its charter and accept the invitation of the Charleston Presbytery for union of all Congregational churches with them. On condition that the society do this and make its funds available to all disabled ministers of the Presbyterian Church of the Charleston Presbytery, they offered to waive all inquiries into past misappropriation of funds.

When, in 1854, the church at Wappetaw brought suit against the society for a share in its funds, there was a difference in the society as to the justice of the suit. One side, led by Richard Yeadon, contended that the church was absolutely independent by its own declaration in 1775, and belonged to no denomination, and that the Wappetaw church, though sim-



ilar in name, had no claim upon its property. To have a claim it must be a donor or in ecclesiastical connection. The minority report, presented by W. Peronneau Finley, claimed that Wappetaw was from the beginning an independent church, and therefore of the same order as Circular Church and entitled to enjoy the benefits of the society; that the act of the Legislature changing the name and character of the society was illegal; and that the society itself could not destroy the validity of the original contract. The society adopted the first view and appointed DeSaussure and Yeadon to defend it in court. It also appointed its president and vice-president to represent the society before the Legislature to secure a renewal of the present charter.

The Wappetaw "Independent or Congregational Church" charged that the Clergy Society had misappropriated the funds used in the repair and improvement of the Circular Church building, and claimed that they were a part of the Clergy Society and their ministers entitled to the benefits arising therefrom, and prayed that the officers and members of the society be required to restore the funds said to be misappropriated, with interest, to the treasury. The Chancellor, Benjamin F. Dunkin, in a long decree held that since the original charter of 1789 speaks of the Independent or Congregational Church of *South Carolina*, it did not limit the benefits to that church in Charleston; but, while there was no other such church at that date in South Carolina, if one or more had been started in other towns, their clergy would have been entitled to its benefits. Therefore the Wappetaw church was not to be excluded if their disabled ministers were otherwise entitled to aid according to the charter of 1789. It was also decreed regarding the charter of 1834 that it was not the purpose of that charter to cut off aid to aged ministers, but to enlarge the sphere of service of the society; and the appropriation of funds for the repair and improvement of the church done by the majority vote of the society was in strict conformity with the plain language of the act. The reason, said the Court, for the change was that the income of the society in the course of

sixty years had outrun the need for pensions for retired ministers of this church. Hence it should be permitted to make other charitable use of its funds rather than simply to allow them to accumulate. "No doubt was suggested, none is entertained by the Court, of the good faith of those who procured the amendment of the charter of 1834, nor of those who made the application of the funds in 1852."

The defendants for the society showed that a member of the society, according to Art. 6 of the By-Laws of 1835, must be a member or supporter of the church in Charleston, and that he forfeits his membership in the society when he ceases to be a member of that church. They also held that the Independent or Congregational church of Charleston had never belonged to any denomination and had never extended itself to include a number of other churches of the same type. The defendants referred to the custom, where there were other churches of the same type, of referring to them, for instance, as the "Congregational Churches of Connecticut," not the "Congregational Church of Connecticut." The original subscribers referred to their desire "to testify their regard for those who have labored *among us*." Dr. Ramsay, in his history of the church in 1814, wrote that the society "may be considered an appendage to the church."

The defendants appealed to the Court of Appeals chiefly to contest the decision that the Wappetaw church came within the scope of the charity of the society; but the decree of 1854 was confirmed by this court in January, 1856, and the society was ready to abide by it.

But the pastor and officers of the Wappetaw church were by no means satisfied with this decision. Before the end of the year another bill was filed by them against the society, demanding that the charter of 1834 be set aside as unconstitutional and that the funds used in assisting in the erection of the Circular Church from 1804 onward, and in the renovation of 1852 and 1853, be replaced by the society. They also claimed that the society had probably existed as early as 1750, and intimated that its funds had not been contributed by Con-

gregationalists and might be shared by other churches. In another publication by the church of Wappetaw it was even charged that the members of the society, in 1825, had intentionally lost their records in order to conceal their intended fraudulent use of their funds for Circular Church.

### A STARTLING DISCOVERY

The proceedings under this bill were postponed for various causes, until the hearing was finally set for a day in June, 1858. The secretary of the society, Mr. Kinsey Burden, Junior, long an active member, deeply desiring to establish the truth about who founded the society and whence came its first funds (all of which was veiled in obscurity because of the loss of the first records), resolved to make one more search for the lost book, and made a phenomenal discovery. Up in the steeple chamber of the church was an old chest which had originally belonged to Deacon Josiah Smith and contained many old records of church transactions. For many years Mr. Smith had been both treasurer of the church and president of the society, and he was very methodical. The old trunk had been searched over more than once, but could it be that the minutes had been overlooked? On ascending the steeple and beginning his search, what was his joy and amazement, not to find the book lost, but to find the original notes in the handwriting of Josiah Smith, Thomas Jones (treasurer), and William Smith (secretary), covering annual reports from 1790 to 1820, with but few omissions, a full account of the "commencement of the Fund," a copy of the original constitution, lists of the members and their relation to the church, a memorandum by Josiah Smith showing that the initiative in forming the society was his, a copy of each of two wills giving certain amounts to the society near its beginning, and the regular annual offerings and dues paid by its members. There was even a letter from William Scott, an original member, written January 5, 1809, stating that he had no longer considered himself a member of the society after leaving Charleston to live in Wappetaw, and



did not consider that the Wappetaw church "had any right to look to the Society after the constitutional number of members had ceased to exist." This number was stated, in the constitution found, as fifteen paying members.

Such a discovery of records covering the exact points at issue might seem to be incredible or fictitious; but after a thorough search through the whole chest, all memoranda on the society were carefully gathered up, and with some confirmatory data, found by Mr. Yeadon in the church records of that date, they were presented in court, examined by the chief "relator" and counsel on the other side, admitted as authentic, and their purport embodied in a supplementary answer. The case was dismissed, the constitutionality of the charter of 1834 sustained, and the society authorized by the court to appropriate an excess of funds for Circular Church even under its charter of 1789; for the church itself was shown to be the founder and almost the exclusive contributor to its funds by its members and supporters. For the country members were very few, and none ever joined the society after its formation unless he became a member or supporter of the church in Charleston. The original country members soon began to die off, so that even Wappetaw, which at first had the requisite number, fifteen, soon fell below that level and never recovered it. By 1816, when annual dues were abolished, the support of the society had for years devolved wholly upon the members and supporters of the church in Charleston. Recognizing the intention of the founders of the society to provide a fund for aged ministers and dependents in South Carolina, it is evident that the country churches, few as they were, did not sustain the plan and have long since disappeared.

#### THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

The end of the litigation came in 1859, when Chancellor Dunkin issued a brief decree, concurred in by the other seven members of the court, saying that all the objects of the bounty of the corporation of 1789 are secured by the act of 1834,

that it was legitimate for the society to seek a way to employ their surplus funds, and that "it was not unfitting that the Society should gratefully remember and piously designate the Independent or Congregational Church in Charleston" as an object to which they should make appropriations. We may add here that the charter of 1789 was restored in perpetuity by the Legislature on December 21, 1858.

The really generous attitude of this old society is strikingly shown in its subsequent relations to the Wappetaw church and its belligerent pastor. As early as August 1, 1857, while their last suit was still pending, the church made a request for a pension of \$1,400 for their pastor, Mr. Cater. The society answered that such a request could not rightfully or legally come before them at that time,—to grant it with the suit pending would be to "stultify themselves"; furthermore, Mr. Cater was not a minister of the "Congregational Church in the State of South Carolina" as a denomination, because he was a Presbyterian clergyman acting as pastor of a Congregational church.

In the summer of 1859 it was found that the Wappetaw church was considering the sale of its chapel at Mount Pleasant to the Charleston Presbytery to be used as a Presbyterian church, as they were being pressed to pay over \$1,000 due as charges of the lawyers in their recent suits against the Clergy Society. Now a member of that society suggested that the society might loan them \$1,000. They made formal application for it, offering the chapel property as security. They urged that consideration be given their "disabled" pastor, Mr. Cater. Their formal letter to the society ends: "Allow us to acknowledge the kind feelings manifested by your committee in behalf of our church, and may that good and Christian feeling always exist between Circular and Wappetaw."

The loan was made, but the society was cautious about the aid to the minister. They would "extend no aid to a disabled minister unless he was actually such, not until he had resigned as pastor of their church." In the society it was clear that they desired now to aid the church to its feet as a Con-

gregational church, "after its years of decrepitude and confusion," and the first step was that it should no longer have a Presbyterian minister. They argued that if they were to be denominational, according to the court decision, there must be denominational ministers to enjoy the aid of the society, and these could not exist unless there were Congregational churches to employ them. So, in a "spirit of forgetfulness of the past," they conferred with the committee of the sister church and finally recommended both the loan and Mr. Cater, not as a recipient of an annual stipend, as a matter of right, but as a disabled minister, formerly pastor, to whom they would make a gift of \$500. There was considerable difficulty in getting a majority vote for this gift, but finally eleven of the twenty members gave formal assent, and the money was paid. His reply was a rather stiff protest of his right to a regular pension of the amount asked, but he offered to compromise for a special donation of \$800 more to meet his expenses on account of his sickness. He denies that he is on the bounty of another "similar society" which he had started some ten or twelve years before, in the Presbyterian Synod, and to which he had paid a life membership. They were "not in funds to grant relief," he writes. The secretary replied that he could not have "a just or well-founded claim to relief from the Clergy Society of two distinct denominations." About six months later Mr. Cater writes again, having seen the "published reports" of the society, and he commends their determination to build up and sustain Congregational churches in the state. He continues: "Permit me to acknowledge my obligation to your spirit of forgiveness. I have supposed that I have some things to forgive; and, following your good example, I now cheerfully forgive what was wounding to my feelings, and express my regret that I allowed myself to use harsh expressions."

Mr. Cater prays that the society may be led to do something for his "permanent relief," but there is no evidence that they were led to do so. Ten years later, in 1870, the society received a rather pathetic letter from Jonathan Ferguson, Esq.,



in behalf of the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, in which he relates that during the war the membership of Wappetaw Congregational church fell away, and after the war the organization was "virtually dead." Some eight members still living were reduced to poverty and unable to secure a minister. Hence, after having the services of a Methodist preacher for a time, they seized the opportunity to become a "missionary Presbyterian Church," and turned over the building to that body. But the debt to the Clergy Society, now amounting, with unpaid interest, to \$2,000, they were "utterly unable to pay." They asked the society to foreclose the mortgage and take the buildings, or to fix an amount for which they would cancel the debt. The congregation in Mount Pleasant could do no more than raise \$250, which should be spent on the building for repairs. "I leave the case in your hands," he concludes. "May God grant that your Church shall never be brought into our low estate!" The society took prompt action. It voted to cancel the mortgage, cheerfully relinquishing its claim upon "Wappetaw Congregational Church," "believing that it is acting in the true interests of religion and the glory of our Common Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." So ended this long litigation, with the clergy actually paying the costs for both sides.

The new rules referred to, adopted May 31, 1860, were explicit in stating that the clergyman, to be entitled to relief, must be, at death or at time of disability, a pastor of an Independent or Congregational church in this state, professing the orthodox creed of the Congregational (Circular) Church in Charleston; that his church must have paid fifty dollars annually into the treasury of this society; that the minister shall have been in connection with no other ecclesiastical body whatsoever; and that, in uniting with some other, he shall forfeit for himself and his family all right to the aid of this society. The church is required to express its assent to these requirements.

The rules are otherwise not much changed,—membership with dues of six dollars on joining, the duties of the finance

committee a little more closely defined, seven members named as a quorum, the treasurer required to give bond for \$5,000, etc. The rules were ordered printed, and the secretary was instructed to send them to Congregational churches in South Carolina for consideration and acceptance. They were sent to three: Wappetaw, Dorchester, and Circular in Charleston. Circular Church promptly accepted the terms and sent its first contribution of \$50. The other two replied rather vaguely. I find no evidence that they ever formally accepted the terms of the rules or contributed anything to secure the aid. Thus ended the efforts of the Clergy Society to establish a Congregational denomination in South Carolina.

### THE LATE YEARS OF THE SOCIETY

In 1862, the year after the church was destroyed by fire, the Clergy Society received a request from the church asking the society to place the income of its funds at the disposal of the corporation of the church to aid in the rebuilding of its places of worship. The request was formally granted, and this has remained the practice of the society ever since; that is, the income of the society has been paid to the church not only for rebuilding but for its current expenses. Provision was made, of course, for the annual expenses of the society itself, and for any appropriations that it might make for other purposes. After the appropriation of \$500 made to Mr. Cater, I find no other sum given for ministerial relief to any minister of the church until October, 1927, when \$100 a year was voted to Dr. George E. Paddock and continued to his widow until her death in July, 1930. There was also a Mrs. S. B. Lanneau, "daughter of a former pastor of Circular Church," who was voted the sum of \$500 on December 17, 1868. This was paid until her death, which occurred (apparently) in 1874.

From this time the life of the society flows on rather uneventfully up to the present time. One rather remarkable personal note is that Mr. Horatio W. Mitchell, who was elected treasurer October 9, 1856, remained the treasurer

until he resigned, January 9, 1911, at the age of eighty-eight. Appropriate resolutions were passed by the society over this remarkable period of service. His son, H. W. Mitchell, was president for fifteen years ending in 1913.

The investments of the society until 1887 were almost entirely in bonds or what was called city stock or state stock; also, in personal bonds, some of which were carried for many years. (It was unconstitutional from the beginning to make loans to any member of the society or for one of them to be security on a bond.) There was also an investment of several thousand dollars in the United States Bank, which proved to be a loss, and one in Confederate bonds to a very limited extent, likewise a loss (\$4,100). The South Carolina Railroad bonds have paid well. In 1868 the annual statement of the treasurer shows that the bonds called good total \$34,698, with \$5,800 more counted doubtful or worthless. The large majority of the investments were then in the bonds of the city of Charleston. As these paid only 4 per cent and the income was shrinking, the finance committee decided to go into real estate. They bought a lot on lower King Street in 1887, and built two houses on it, rented for \$40 apiece. Five or six houses were secured as time went on, but they did not pay large returns on account of low rent and charges upon them. After some years loans were made again to individuals, which yielded a larger income than the rentals. At present about all the property of the society is five houses, and its gross income is about \$2,500. In the tornado of September, 1938, it suffered heavy damages to the King Street houses.

In 1876 there was a significant vote to cease paying anything to Circular Church because it was no longer needed. This was at the time when the church corporation, in a struggle to oust the pastor, Rev. W. H. Adams, had cut his salary to \$100 a year. After his departure, but not until September 16, 1878, payments were resumed. The officials of the church and of the society were mostly the same persons.

And so for many years the Clergy Society has been simply an incorporated body holding and administering property for



the benefit of the church which brought it into being. No one is eligible for membership in it except male members of Circular Church. It receives no income except such as accrues from loans or rentals. It has no accumulated bank funds or legacies. It has no debts except such as may be incurred for current or exceptional repairs. It is still liable to pay pensions to elderly or disabled ministers of Circular Church or their widows or children, and now pays a pension to the writer. On account of the decrease in the membership and financial status of the members it hardly seems possible that the church could continue to function without the aid of the society. In recent years it has spent considerable money in the rehabilitation of all its houses, and they are rentable, but there is a considerable sum being carried for these repairs. The church has no parsonage, but at times the society has rented an apartment to the minister of the church.

## EPILOGUE

### THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP

The present pastor is Rev. C. Rexford Raymond, D.D., who was called from pastoral work in Gates County, North Carolina, in April, 1941. He is a graduate of Oberlin College and Theological Seminary and has served in Congregational churches in New York State, Ohio, and Colorado, including the South Congregational Church of Brooklyn, New York. He was engaged in educational work for some years at Berea College, Kentucky, as vice-president and dean of religious education, and was for several years pastor of the Congregational church at Southern Pines, North Carolina.

Dr. Raymond's pastorate thus far has been distinctly a wartime pastorate. The population of Charleston has greatly increased; the responsibilities of the times have been met by the creation and wide distribution of literature about the church and by a broad program of hospitality to service men and women. The membership has about doubled, the income has greatly increased, and benevolences have reached a new high of \$600 a year. Special socials and services have been held for soldiers and sailors on Thursday and Sunday evenings. The Young People's Society has taken an active part in conducting these socials. For the past four years the War Victims and Service Committee of the denomination has co-operated with the church in providing an assistant to the pastor. A special project was carried on at Dorchester Terrace, a new settlement near the Charleston Navy Yard. A Sunday school of about fifty was organized, and pastoral work was done among resident families. A church building was planned, and a grant of \$5,000 was promised by the Home Mission Board. The impossibility of getting priority for material from

the government proved an insurmountable obstacle to construction.

Dr. Raymond has taken special interest in beautifying the church and making some changes that increase the worshipfulness of the interior. The pulpit platform has been rearranged as a chancel, with the Communion table at the back, surmounted by a white marble cross and brass candlesticks given as a memorial of Mrs. Agnes Kessler by her daughter Agnes. New choir seats have been installed, so that the junior choir can be seated at the right of the chancel. New carpets have been purchased by the Ladies' Home Missionary Society for the aisles and the chancel, and broad steps leading from the floor to the platform have been built.

During wartime it became necessary to install a new furnace. The men of the church who worked at the navy yard were able to secure it at wholesale rates, and they proceeded to install it themselves, thus saving the church some \$600.

One of the present uses of this church is suggested by these lines, written by Dr. Raymond at Christmas in 1944:

Our ancient Charleston Church on Meeting Street  
Flings wide her open door each passing day  
That all who wish may enter, rest and pray;  
And often weary folk find there a seat  
Before the Cross that makes their peace complete.  
When war's wild tumult sees fair hope decay  
And hatred's clamor chases faith away,  
Within that open door all fears retreat.

When Christmas joy-bells fill the air with cheer,  
In spite of fearful war and world-wide fright,  
Love's open door will bid distrust depart  
And faith will usher in a glad New Year.  
Amid the sacred songs of Christmas night  
Let Christ be born again within the heart.



## APPENDIX A

### INSCRIPTIONS

These are a few of the many hundred inscriptions on the stones and monuments in the church-yard which have been copied and are in the custody of Miss Ruth Graham in Charleston. The letters and numbers at the end of each indicate the section and the row of the yard in which the stone stands. The inscriptions which were in the old Circular Church have also been preserved. The names of the makers or sculptors of the stone are found on some of the stones.

Here lyes Buried  
the Body of  
Ann Dart aged  
19 Months who departed  
this life June the  
16th Anno Dom  
1729

B 7

The above is the oldest legible inscription in the yard.

In Memory  
of  
BENJAMIN WILKINS RUBERRY  
who died Nov<sup>r</sup>. 6.<sup>th</sup> 1806  
aged 23 years and 4 months.  
But a few short months since  
he embarked into Life; health  
bloomed on his cheek &  
Flattering indeed were the  
expectations of his friends but  
death relentless nipped the  
ripening shoot & snatched it to  
the tomb; such the fate of  
RUBERRY  
Peace to his Gentle Spirit

E 6

SACRED  
 To the Memory of  
 MRS. MARY CAROLINE  
 BLANDING  
 Relict of  
 COLONEL ABRAM BLANDING  
 And Daughter of the late  
 CHANCELLOR DE SAUSSURE  
 Who departed this life December 21st 1862,  
 In the 69th year of her age.  
 Her moral and intellectual qualities  
 Benevolent temper and polished manners  
 Rendered her dear to her friends  
 And honored in her social position.  
 As a Daughter, Wife, Parent and Mistress  
 Her duties were faithfully performed  
 From high conscientious motive and  
 Her consistent membership of the church  
 For upward of half a century,  
 Attested the sincerity and devotion  
 Of her christian character.

---

Her Sons in testimony of her worth  
 And their affection erect this monument  
 To the memory of a beloved Mother.

D 11

Here lyes buried  
 the Body of  
 Mrs. Elizabeth Simmons  
 wife of Mr. Ebenezer  
 Simmons departed this  
 life September y<sup>e</sup> 18th  
 1740 aged 35 years  
 H. Emmes Boston

B 4





Luget hoc Marmor nobis ademptum  
 Virium Rev.<sup>m</sup> NATHAN BASSETT  
 Artium Cantabridgiae apud Nov-Anglos magistre  
 Unde primas hauserat Literas  
 Bonisque artibus ita vacavit  
 Ut laurea decoratus nec mediocriter dona  
 Inde prodierit  
 Eximiis Naturae dotibus praedives inclaru -

.....  
 Ecclesiae huic gemenci Quindecim circiter annos  
 Pastor

Amandus aequae ac amans  
 Fidei cum pace Quidam aeq. Cust-  
 Inter concio nondum haud ita copia fandi  
 Iudicio tamen et Salibus Dictone tersa  
 Methodo arctiore Sententiarum -Nexu  
 Magis pollens

.....  
 Vario is Succumbens e vivis excelsit Die  
 Junii 26 Anno Dom. 1738 Aetatis suae 37  
 ... Flere et meminisse ne lictum est.

.....  
 .....

Wm. Codner, Boston N.E.

(With portrait bust at rear of  
 the church against the wall)

F 2

Notent Omnes hic Positas esse Reliquas

REV. GUIIELMI HUTSON

Quia viriis (quibus juvenisillectus est) Gratia Divina  
reclamatus efficio Sacro ministri se dedit A.D. 1743 quo  
et domesticis clare et ille egre fugendis perduravit ides  
ut erat

Conjux clarus amans fidelisque parens et benignus herus vitam  
prosperam egit et (ad Deum vocatus) reliquit populam  
liberosque lugentes A.D. 1761 aetatis 41.

Here are deposited

The Precious Remains of the Rev.<sup>d</sup> William Hutson, the five  
last Years of his Life, one of the Pastors  
of this Church who being of a  
truly noble Catholic Spirit, an affectionate Husband and parent  
Sincere friend and kind Master, endeavor'd to adorn the Doctrine  
of God our Saviour in all things, exchanged this for a better  
Life, April

11.<sup>th</sup> 1761 in the 41<sup>st</sup> Year of his Age and has a Monument erected  
for

himself in the hearts of his Acquaintances, Hearers, and Friends.

(Four lines in Latin follow ending in the English verse)

How joyful was his flight

Up to the blest abode

Guided by troops of Angels bright

To meet a smiling God.

D 3

To the Memory of  
 THOMAS LAMBOLL Esquire  
 The ready Friend and Patron of this Church and Society  
     Justly esteemed  
     For his long and faithful Services toward it  
 And the Promotion of its Interests, Peace and Welfare  
     From its Infant State to near half a Century after.  
 Whose Moderation, Firmness, Integrity and Uprightness  
     In the Discharge of various Trusts reposed in him  
         Both public and private  
 Rendered his death tho' at a late Period Much Lamented.  
 He sustained Honorary many years sundry honorable Employments  
     In Government with great Dignity.  
     Having in Time prepared for Eternity  
 He met the King of Terrors with a composure that was truly striking  
     And loudly preached the divine Serenity of his Soul  
     At the important and trying Moment of his Dissolution  
 Which took place Saturday Evening October 29th, 1774  
     Aged 80 Years two Months.  
     In Faith He died in Dust He lies  
     But Faith foresees that Dust must rise.

D 9

(Thomas Lamboll was the clerk of the church from 1732 to near the end of his life and transcribed many valuable records earlier than 1732)



In Memory of  
JOB PALMER

A native of Falmouth Mass.  
For 73 years a resident of this city  
and during 39 years clerk of this  
church in which he afterwards  
discharged the office of deacon for  
30 years till he closed his office  
and his life on the 30<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>. 1845  
having reached the unusual age  
of 97 years and 5 months  
Favoured with an uncommon share  
of health during the whole  
of his protracted life he exhibited  
an unblameable and exemplary  
Christian character; and till, within  
two or three months of his decease  
enjoyed in a rare degree both his  
physical and mental powers. Himself  
the son of an exemplary and useful  
minister of Christ, the pastor of his  
native town, he had the additional  
..... witnessing the  
accession of two of his ....  
to the ministry of reconciliation  
one of them having been for upward  
of 21 years pastor of this church.  
And now behold my witness is in  
heaven and my record is on high  
Job XVI. 19

D 12

(The son referred to was Benjamin M. Palmer)

In Memory  
Of the Rev<sup>d</sup> WILLIAM TENNENT AM

Pastor of this Church  
(And principally instrumental in the  
Erection of this building,  
Dedicated to the worship  
Of Almighty God ;)  
Who died at the High hills of Santee  
Aug<sup>t</sup> 11th 1777 ;  
In the 37th year of his age.  
He was distinguished  
For quickness of perception  
And solidity of judgment ;  
For energy and firmness of mind ;  
For inflexible patriotism  
And ardent public spirit ;  
For sincere and zealous piety,  
For the boldness with which he enforced  
The claims of the Deity  
And vindicated the rights of man,  
As a Preacher he was prompt,  
Solemn, instructive and persuasive.  
Of every social virtue he was  
A bright example.  
“ Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ”

As indicated above, this memorial to William Tennent was placed in what is now the Unitarian Church because he led in the plans to put up this building as an overflow for the Meeting Street Church, but died before it was erected. The Unitarian Secession occurred about forty years after his death.

## APPENDIX B

### LIST OF PASTORS

The early part of this record, from 1691 to 1814, was published by David Ramsay in his history of Circular Church in 1814. The names of Thomas Barrett, known to have been a Dissenting Preacher in Charleston in 1685, and William Dunlop, known as "the minister" in Charleston in 1685-89, have now been added from other sources than the church records, as indicated in the text. The later pastorates are found in more recent church books. From the beginning of Josiah Smith's pastorate in 1734 to the end of William Hollinshead's, the pastors whose terms run concurrently were co-pastors. James Edmonds came as an unordained lecturer. The date of his ordination is unknown. Most of this list was printed in the Church Manual of 1934.

PASTORS	FROM	SETTLED	REMOVED	DIED
Thomas Barrett	New England			
William Dunlop	Glasgow, Scotland			
Benjamin Pierpont	Roxbury, Mass.	1691		1698
Hugh Adams	Massachusetts	1698	1698	1748
John Cotton	Plymouth, Mass.	1698		1699
Archibald Stobo	Scotland	1700	1704	
William Livingston	Ireland	1704		1720
Nathan Bassett	Roxbury, Mass.	1724		1738
Josiah Smith	Charleston, S. C.	1734	1750	1781
James Parker	Gravesend, England	1740		1742
James Edmonds Lect	England	1753	1765-67	1794
William Hutson	England	1756		1761
Andrew Bennett	England	1761	1763	1804
John Thomas	Wales	1767		1771
William Tennent	Norwalk, Conn.	1772		1777
William Hollinshead	Fairfield, N. J.	1783		1817
Isaac S. Keith	Alexandria, Va.	1788		1813
Benjamin M. Palmer	Charleston, S. C.	1814	1835	1847
Anthony Forster	No. Carolina	1815	1817	1820
Reuben Post	Washington, D. C.	1836		1858
Alonzo G. Fay	New York	1859	1859	
Thomas O. Rice	Brighton, Mass.	1860	1864	1888
Wm. Hooper Adams	Eutaula, Ala.	1867	1878	1880
A. H. Missildine	Lebanon, Mo.	1879	1888	1893
Henry M. Grant*	Middleboro, Mass.	1888	1898	1902
J. Edward Kirby	Provo, Utah	1899	1901	1939
Augustus J. Davisson	Herndon	1902	1904	1940
J. Sherman Calhoun	Forrest, Ill.	1904	1906	
Gardner S. Butler	Demorest, Ga.	1906	1910	1930
Benjamin Rush Thornberry	Samonauk, Ill.	1911	1911	
E. Cullum Grimshaw	Hammond, La.	1912	1914	
A. S. Gaffney	Atlanta, Ga.	1915	1916	
George Evans Paddack	Tryon, N. C.	1917	1926	1928
George N. Edwards	Walla Walla, Wash.	1926	1941	
C. Rexford Raymond	Gates Co. Parish, N. C.	1926		

\* Mr. Grant was born in Persia.



## APPENDIX C

### LIST OF RECORDS

In the Archives of the Independent or Congregational Church  
of Charleston, South Carolina

- I. "Register of Independent Congregational Church from 1732 to 1796." This book contains copies of records as far back as 1695. Its record of deaths, baptisms, and marriages cover only the period from January, 1732, to May, 1738.
- II. A partial copy of the above, 1732-1734.
- III. A Book of Accounts, 1773-1789. This contains cost of building, etc., of Archdale Street Church, accounts of repairs of Meeting Street Church in 1780 after British occupation, etc.
- IV. Record of Marriages, 1790 to May 30, 1815, and of Baptisms January, 1784-June 1, 1815.
- V. "Independent C. Church Register" "Second Volume of the Register beginning April 10, 1796." This contains the rules for interments in the two burial grounds, but no register of births, marriages, and deaths. Last entry, October 4, 1824.
- VI. "Account of Sales of Pews in the Independent Circular Built Church, June 25, 1806."
- VII. Rent List of Pews in the Circular Built Church, 1806-1816.
- VIII. Account of Pew Rents, 1806 up to 1822.
- IX. "Independent Church Cash Book No. 2," January 10, 1807-February, 1822.
- X. Book containing the Statement of Faith and Constitution and long list of signatures. 1818.
- XI. "Treasurer's Cash Book Circular Church." From Josiah Smith, January 1, 1822, to James D. Mitchell, December 20, 1860.
- XII. Book of Church Records (Third Register), 1825-1850.
- XIII. a. Record Book of the "Society for the Relief of Elderly and Disabled Ministers and the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy of the Independent or Congregational Church in the State of South Carolina." October 4, 1825-October 4, 1836.

- XIII. b. (Supplement to Vol. 13) "Vol. I of Minutes of Society for Disabled Ministers" abbreviated to Clergy Society. A record of the finding of the lost records of this society in 1858, giving origin, charter members, rules, and continuing subsequent records and accounts from that date to the present.
- XIII. c. "Constitution and Bylaws of the Society for the Relief of Disabled Clergymen," etc. Names of officers. 1835-1873.
- XIV. a. "Record Book." Meetings of the Members of the Church from September 5, 1828 (called by Dr. B. M. Palmer), to December 24, 1860.
- XIV. b. Minutes of the Charleston Benevolent Society. 1827-1829.
- XV. "Records of Circular Church," March 4, 1836-September 5, 1858. Small book containing admissions and marriages of white members and admissions and baptisms of colored members.
- XVI. "Colored Members — Circular Church" — List of Colored Members in the order of their classes. An Addendum is a section about the Laurel Street Mission.
- XVII. "Interments in Circular Church Yard," November, 1844-June 26, 1867.
- XVIII. a. "1848 Colporteur Society in acct. with Daniel Glenn."
- XVIII. b. "Colporteur Society of Circular Church," 1848.
- XIX. "Record Book of the Independent or Congregational Church," January 13, 1851 — January 5, 1873. (Fourth Register.)
- XX. Record of proceedings and accounts of the Pastor and Deacons dealing with the fund established by Miss Sarah B. Stevens, 1851-1861, 1869-1916.
- XXI. "Minutes on Improvement of the Circular Church," 1852-1854.
- XXII. "Treasurer's Day Book Circular Church" 1852-1862.
- XXIII. "Independent or Congregational Church in Charlestown," December 24, 1860-1904. (Fifth Register.)
- XXIV. "Minutes of Male Members of Circular Church," February, 1861-1913. Contains constitution of the church and of the Sunday school in 1885. (Sixth Register.)
- XXV. "Church Register." Sundry data of Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths.
- XXVI. "Cash Account." Building Committee, 1872-1873.

- XXVII. "Record Book of the Independent or Congregational Church," July 14, 1873-1916. (Seventh Register.)
- XXVIII. A book of records of the Sunday school from its reopening June 2, 1878, down to 1907.
- XXIX. Catalogue of the Library, 1878-1885.
- XXX. "Church Register," 1879-1912. Includes admission of members, marriages, and baptisms; one death. (Eighth Register.)
- XXXI. Small book of Sunday school records, 1885.
- XXXII. Circular Church Bible School Library. Books loaned, etc. W. S. Brown.
- XXXIII. "Bonds Received from J. D. Mitchell, Treasurer," November 10, 1890-1894.
- XXXIV. Pamphlet. Acknowledgments of receipts for building funds. 1891. (Missing.)
- XXXV. Class Records of Sunday school. Miss Charlotte E. Lance, Superintendent.
- XXXVI. Glass-framed signatures of original subscribers to the Society for the Relief of Elderly Ministers, etc., February 17, 1789.
- XXXVII. Book of photographs of the churches.











